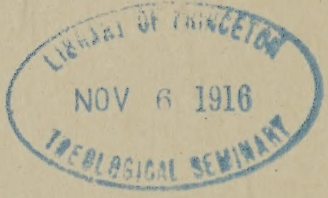
# CHRIST'S EXPERIENCE OF GOD

FRANK H. DECKER

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# CHRIST'S EXPERIENCE OF GOD

BY

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PROVIDENCE, R. I.

WITH INTRODUCTION BY PRES. WILLIAM D. HYDE

THE PILGRIM PRESS
BOSTON NEW YORK CHICAGO

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THE PILGRIM PRESS
BOSTON

TO MY WIFE

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## FOR THE SECOND EDITION

THE appreciation of the first edition of this book encouraged me to write this larger volume. Almost the entire book has been rewritten, and several new chapters have been added.

I have written only as I have felt the compulsion of the Divine Spirit, and I have been confirmed in the truth of my teaching as I have seen its effects, as I have preached it at Church House.

I have brought together at the end of this volume all that the New Testament says concerning the Kingdom of God. Before reading my words, please read these words of Holy Scripture. They form the best part of this book. One who will fill his mind with them, will feel their regenerating and converting power.

All that I can hope is, that my words may aid my readers to see more clearly the inexhaustible treasure of Spiritual truth contained in these words of The Kingdom of God.

Thoughtful readers will notice a number of repetitions in what I have written, which I have retained, because such repetitions occur in the words of Christ, and serve to emphasize the vital truths which they set forth.

"Come out of the enclosures where half-truths quarrel into the open spaces where they unite."

"Every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."—*Matthew 13: 52.*

# INTRODUCTION

## By President Hyde

The pendulum in religion has swung from a falsely motivated individualism to an unmotivated socialism: with the result that religion is spreading, but spreading thin. We need in religion a deeply rooted, rightly motivated individualism as the support of a wide-branching fruit-bearing socialism.

That is just what this book gives. Here one of our most successful social workers presents the conscious and continuous relationship of the individual soul with the Father as the open secret, alike of Jesus Christ, of himself, and of any man who would have blessedness in his own life and power for good over the lives of others.

To the hasty, superficial, and unsympathetic reader it will appear as merely one more collection of pious platitudes. Read thoughtfully, putting the experience described along

side one's own experience, it will bring home the reality of religion, and make Jesus' parables luminous with spiritual insight.

Nowhere has the spiritual life, and the perils that beset it, been more simply and sincerely portrayed. The chapter on the Perils of Environment (the Parable of the Tares) is the best argument yet written against the divorce of Christians:—divorce not merely from uncongenial spouses; but divorce from dishonest business partners; divorce from frivolous social companions; divorce from corrupt political associates; divorce from the down and out.

The Kingdom of God comes just so far and just so fast as Christ's experience of God is reproduced by men who in the process become themselves new Christs.

WILLIAM DEWITT HYDE, PRES.

*Bowdoin College.*

# FOREWORD

To my Book. In the name of Jesus Christ I send you to preach, to every one who shall read your pages, his kingdom of God. That is your only possible mission—for that purpose you were born into the world—there is no other cause for your existence. Go forth and preach the Kingdom of God.

In the language of Jesus, "Salute nothing by the way." Tarry not to discuss subjects that are not vitally related to you. Above all things be not held up, or turned aside, by those who would have you tarry on your mission to consider their theologies or ecclesiastical systems. You will never be able to fulfil your mission if you stop to discuss such matters. Do not even salute them by the way. Your master Jesus did not. He ignored them, except when he found it necessary to rebuke those who substituted them for his religion. Some of those who have seen you in your earlier days declare that you lack much be-

cause you are not more theological. Thank God for their criticism, which we are glad to believe to be true. Their theologies have split the church into hundreds of opposing divisions—with the result that it has been powerless to save the world. We do not need more theology, but there is desperate need for more of the vital personal religion which you embody and which it is your mission to teach. All the theology that the world needs is embodied in your Kingdom of God.

Your mission is the most important ever committed to a book. You have the keys of the Kingdom of God, and therefore the keys of heaven and of hell. Make very plain to all of your readers what is Christ's experience of God, which he calls the Kingdom of God. Tell them what the fruits of that Kingdom are. Show them the door that opens into it. Put them on their guard concerning its perils, and finally gather up all the energy of your being in an attempt to win every reader to Christ's soul-perfecting experience. You are sent on a life or death mission. So greatly needed is your message that your master says

that you can hardly afford to spend the time in burying the dead.

For the first time I have come to feel as Jesus felt when he told his disciples that it was more important that they preach the Kingdom of Heaven than that they do any other thing in the world. I will tell you how I entered into this feeling. First through such an experience of the kingdom in my own life as made me realize its unspeakable value and its vital necessity. Then my zeal to send you forth without delay was mightily increased by the testimony of many living witnesses, with whom I have been in closest personal contact, of the power of your message to save men from sins, from which everything else had failed to save them. As I sat in my room at Church House recently a woman came to me and said, "How can I tell you how thankful I am to you for the religion that has given me power to overcome and almost to forget my sinful life? You don't know, you can't know what it means to me to have escaped from the life of shame in which I was held by a power greater than my own,

until the power of God, which you taught me to find, came to my rescue." An hour later another woman said, "Help me again to realize the presence of God, that I may feel His power in this hour when I am giving up my work because of nervous weakness." As we prayed, asking that the Father would grant her the needed strength, she said, "The prayer is answered, the strength has come, and I shall be able to go on with my work." The same day a university man, who had fallen into deepest degradation, said, "It is wonderful to have entered into that direct fellowship with God in which the power of drink and those other evils that sent me to a prison cell are at last powerless." After he had left me I thought of others, like him, with whom I am in daily touch. There was one who, nearly four years ago, was saved from habitual drunkenness after it had wasted his life for five years. His father, a noble preacher of the gospel, and his dear mother, a sainted woman of God, suffered untold torture during those years of his drunkenness. To-day he is a source of unspeakable joy to all who

know him. Then my thoughts went to other men who once were drunkards and criminals, but who have lived in the Kingdom of God for years, enjoying its protection from evil and experiencing its ever increasing light and power and righteousness, and I said, I must send my book with its glad tidings of salvation as far and as fast as possible.

Again I say, Go forth and preach the kingdom of God. You know the love which I have put into you and how earnestly I shall pray for your success. Go in the name of holy love, which is the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

# I

# THE RELIGION OF JESUS CHRIST

Mat. 16: 28, Mat. 17: 1–8, II Peter 1: 16–19, I Cor. 4 : 20, Ro. 14 : 17, 18, Mat. 5 : 3–12, Rev. 12 : 10, James 2 : 5, Heb. 12 : 28, Heb. 1 : 8, 9, Col. 1 : 12, 13

*The full text of these passages may be found in the appendix on pages 319, 320.*

## CHAPTER I

## THE RELIGION OF JESUS CHRIST

THERE are many false types of Christianity in the world, as Jesus predicted there would be, and it is of vital importance that their errors be pointed out, that men may not be deceived by them. They may be known by their fruit. So Jesus declared. "Men do not gather figs from thorns." No more can the fruits of genuine Christianity be found connected with any of its perversions. The true Christian life can be lived only by one who has the true Christian religion. The Christian character can be grown only in Christian soil. What now we wish to do is to make clear the vital connection between Christ's religion and his character, which was the fruit of that religion. Jesus reduced his religion to practice. He lived his religion to the full. He trusted it implicitly. It was his meat and his drink. Take away the religion of Christ and there

is nothing significant about the life of Christ. His character was the fruit of his religion, and he declares that that religion will produce the same character in every one who holds it; that that religion will transform every believer into his image, and so into the image of God. The same tree will always bear the same fruit. The real religion of Christ will always enable one to live the life of Christ. We cannot believe what he believed without developing such a character as he developed.

That the character of Christ is above all other characters known on earth is conceded by all who know him, even by those who do not wholly accept his teaching or believe in the reality of his personal experience of God. The secret of that life does not seem, however, to have been clearly revealed to all who call themselves Christians. Many Christians think of Jesus as the Son of God in a unique way, and therefore regard his character as a unique creation. Perhaps this is the reason that so little real effort has been made to understand how such a character was developed. No more important question can be considered than that

of the secret of Jesus, how it was that he was able to develop a character that has commanded the worship of men wherever it has been known, and must yet compel every knee to bow before him.

Some lives of Christ have been written in which his faith and religious experience do not figure at all. As well write a life of Darwin without mentioning evolution, or of Marconi without mentioning electricity. The chief significance in the life of Jesus is found in the religion he taught and which he claimed to have experienced. When we come to ask precisely what the religion of Jesus Christ was, which is the only true Christianity, there arises a babel of contradictory voices bewildering the mind of the sincere inquirer.

There is no doubt that Jesus claimed that he enjoyed a personal experience of God. He was sure of the presence of Another with whom he was in direct touch and whom he recognized as his Father. He felt His touch and heard His voice. Jesus did not think of himself as the Father, or as a part of the Father, in any such sense that the Father was

not another personality. His Father was not his own higher self, but another self. There were two wills, his and God's. The God of Jesus was entirely personal. He was another individual. Jesus was in the Father and the Father in him, only as he prayed that other men might be one in God and God in them. The God of Jesus was a Spirit, but a personal Spirit, and the Father of all spirits.

Jesus believed that he experienced God. He was conscious of his personal union with Him. That was his religion. His experience of God was intimate and enduring, more intimate than his experience of his nearest friends. God was more real to him than his mother. He came nearer to God than to those earthly companions with whom he was most closely associated. He spent whole nights in communion with God; and would often go apart early in the morning to meet Him before he would consent to meet others. Jesus needed no man to help him to realize the presence of God. "I am alone," he said, "and yet I am not alone; for the Father is with me."

Jesus was made perfect by his experience of God. He did indeed inherit from his people much of his righteousness, but he also inherited from them all their prejudices and sinful tendencies. Heredity made no exception in his case. It did not hand down to him the good only. He was made in all respects like unto other men. His appetites and passions were as real and as tense as ours. They imperilled him as they imperil us. He was encompassed with all of our infirmities of thought, speech and conduct. In the face of the evil tendencies of his nature and environment he felt powerless in himself to achieve a righteous character. "Of myself I can do nothing," he said.

He declared his dependence upon God in his struggles for perfection. He confessed that after he had put all of himself into the effort to overcome sin, and he would have been defeated but for the help which came to him from his daily experience of God. In the wilderness of his temptation and in the garden of his great trial he had to be strengthened by God.

Jesus aimed at perfection with a perfect

motive and through fellowship with a perfect God. He knew that only through a growing experience of God could he hope to attain the righteousness of God. There was no doubt in the mind of Christ on this point,—none. Through the Kingdom of God to the perfection of God; that was the experience of the only man of our race who has sought and won a perfect character. Let me give all possible emphasis to this fact. Jesus sought union with God, not merely for the joy of such a union, but first of all for its righteousness, knowing that if through it he experienced the righteousness of God, all other attributes of God would be added to him. His single life aim was to perfect himself as his Father in Heaven is perfect; to fulfill all the righteousness of God. His motive was without flaw, since he sought for all men the perfection which he sought for himself. Without such a motive his aim would have been unattainable. Fellowship with God, the perfect God, was the method by which Jesus sought to attain his aim. He realized that without such fellowship he could not possibly hope to secure the devel-

opment and fulfillment of the divine possibilities of his nature. Therefore Jesus regarded his fellowship with God as the supreme treasure. The Kingdom of God to him was so valuable that he would gladly give all that he had to possess it. Without it there was no possibility of perfecting his soul. Without union with God he would be as a seed without soil, or as meal without leaven, or as a branch without a vine. His soul would be lost to all possibility of perfection unless he kept himself in growing experience of God. Knowing this, we understand why Jesus was prepared to maintain his union with God at any cost; why he sacrificed all that he had, and finally his life, on the cross, rather than contradict the nature of God, and so mar his fellowship with Him, his experience of Him.

That relationship is open to all men upon the same condition that marked Christ's entrance into it. If there is a man who cannot have Christ's experience of God, then there is a man who cannot hope to attain with Christ to the perfection of God. But thanks be unto God, there is no man of our race who may

not ultimately be perfected, since there is none who may not share to the full Christ's experience of God. That experience at first may be very feeble. The union with God of some men may be like that of a mother and a new born child, or like the union of one of the least of seeds with the soil and sun, but it will grow if it is cultivated, until it perfects the humblest man remaining in it.

The religious experience of Jesus Christ is a reality, as everyone may know who will fulfill the conditions of experiencing it.

"Why cannot I follow thee now?" Peter asked his Lord. All the other disciples and friends of Jesus might have asked the same question, for not one of them was able to follow him in his holy life of love. Their failure was wholly due to the fact that as yet they were without their Master's experience of God. The Holy Spirit had not yet come into fellowship with them. They therefore did not understand God's will concerning Jesus, as he understood it. They could not follow him, because they savored not of the things of God, as they are known only by those who are in

the Kingdom of God, that is, in personal union with God. They did not share their Lord's aim to be perfect as his Father in Heaven is perfect. How could they follow him? They did not have their Lord's motive, how could they either understand or continue with him? Without his aim, motive or method, Christ's most loyal friends were forced into denial of him, even when they were ready to lay down their lives for his sake.

And here is revealed the secret of the failure of many now to develop in the character of Christ. As I have said, that character is the unique fruit of Christ's religion, of his personal fellowship with God. Only as one shares Christ's aim, motive, and experience of God, is one a true Christian. Only so can one have that fellowship with Christ and God by which one's sins are overcome and one is transformed with Christ into the image of God. A true Christian is one who shares Christ's experience of God; is one whose faith in the righteousness and love of God rests upon his personal, spiritual union with God. There are many whose supposed experience of God does not

commend itself by the character it has developed. Judged by its fruit it is to be avoided rather than desired. Some men, seeking union with God, have become fanatical; while the so-called spiritual experiences of others have not resulted in purifying their lives. These men have not sought God with Christ's conception of Him, or with his motive for seeking Him, which was that he might be qualified for larger usefulness in ministering to the world. No experience of God can prove beneficial to men except as it fills their hearts with love for men. Our debt to Christ for showing us the way to a true experience of God, with its fruit of a perfectly God-like character, is immeasurable. His service in showing us how to find God is the highest service that a man can ever render another. He has done this; he found and revealed the way to God. This is what he considered to be his great mission in the world, and he succeeded in fulfilling this mission. It thrills one's soul to write these words. Jesus of Nazareth found the only possible way to God for himself and for the world; and at the

expense of suffering and death he has forever revealed it to the world.

Jesus called his religion the Kingdom of God. That kingdom is a personal relationship to a personal God—a relationship that is open to all men upon precisely the same conditions that Jesus fulfilled in entering into it. The gospel of the kingdom which Jesus preached and which at last he commanded his disciples to preach to every creature in all the world is the good news of this relationship to God.

"And it came to pass that Jesus began to preach, saying, 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.'" "And He went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God." "Go thou, and preach the Kingdom of God," was the command of Jesus to His disciples. They were to limit all their religious teaching to the one subject of the Kingdom. In doing so they were to follow the example of their Master, who considered that his sole mission in the world was to experience and teach the Kingdom of God. So important did he regard its proclamation that when one said

unto him, "Lord, suffer me first to go bury my father," Jesus replied: "Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God." And when another said, "Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go and bid them farewell, which are at home in my house," Jesus said to him, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God."

"The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the Kingdom should come, he answered them and said, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, lo, there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you." It is fellowship with God, for which man was prepared from the foundation of the world, when God made him out of Himself. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25: 34.)

Because God the Father and Man his son

are of the same nature, both divine, personal relationship between them is possible. No one who believes in a personal God to whom man is vitally related, will question the possibility of such a relationship as the Kingdom of God. Those who deny the possibility of such a fellowship, must be prepared to deny the existence of a personal God. This Kingdom is a spiritual relationship, in which God's spirit bears witness with man's spirit. It is a direct relationship between man and God, in which no one comes between them, not even Christ himself. "Call no man father," Jesus said, meaning that no man should take the place of God in our thoughts and experience. And again, he said, "When you seek your Father, enter your closet, and close the door, so that you and He will be absolutely alone." Exclude everyone from that sacred relationship, and come obediently to God as a son comes to his father. You are not to come to Him through another who is in union with Him, but immediately, and alone. It is a relationship of two, not three, of Father and son, with no one between them. It is only in such

a relationship that a man is in the Kingdom of God. This Kingdom, according to the teaching of Jesus, is the vital thing in religion. Through it only, God fulfills His perfect purpose in the lives of men. It is the one chosen instrument in his hand for that purpose. It is, therefore, like the net, with which the fisherman catches his fish; like the good seed, by which the husbandman makes beautiful and fruitful his ground; like the leaven, with which the woman transforms her meal into wholesome bread. It is Christ's way to perfection for man, other than which there can be none.

This relationship is a treasure, a hidden treasure. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

Notice that the treasure of each parable is

the seeker for the treasure of the other. In one case, man is the treasure, in the other, God. Taken together, the two parables represent God and man as seeking each other. These two, God and man, are the great treasures of the universe, each needing the other for his completion, neither being sufficient in himself. Apart from fellowship with God, man is valueless, there is no purpose in his existence, he would better not have been born. Apart from man, God's very existence would have no value. Very strikingly Christ emphasizes these facts in these companion parables where man is finding his value in God, and God is finding His value in man. It is only in this Kingdom that man's infinite worth is discovered and revealed, for man's value is recognized only as he is seen in his relationship to a perfect and eternal God. As the treasure of the acorn is seen only in its relationship to the oak, so the treasure in man is seen only as he is recognized as a son of God, having in him all the possibilities of God's perfection. When one thus regards man as an embodiment of God, who has put not a

little of Himself, but all of Himself, into him, and has given Himself to all the ministries involved in developing and perfecting His child, then one sees that man is a treasure of infinite value.

This Kingdom of God is also a regenerating relationship. "Another parable spake He unto them, The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened." Union with God is the one natural and only possible condition of transformation into the image of God. God is the Leaven which must be in hidden, spiritual touch with man if man is to be regenerated and perfected. Personal fellowship with God enables God to give Himself increasingly to man until man is filled with all of His fullness. "Marvel not," Jesus said to Nicodemus, "that I said unto you you must be born from above."

One cannot explain the mystery of this divine union, any more than one can explain the mysteries of other fellowships; but one may be sure of the Kingdom because it is an experience and not a theory, by the fruit of

which it may be known. There is no possibility of perfecting man's soul except as God dwells in him, as leaven dwells in meal. God must be in man, in union with his innermost soul. No faith or worship of God will change man into the image of God that does not result in this union of God and man, such as leaven has with the meal that it transforms. What a type of the religion of Jesus Christ as he experienced and taught it, is given us in this parable of the leaven and the meal. This is the religion of Christ as St. Paul taught it when he said that he had his eye on "the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," by which he meant that he realized that God must be in him as He was in Jesus Christ, if he was to attain to the perfect righteousness of God, as Christ attained it. God must be in us as He was in Christ if we, like Christ, are to be perfected, as God is perfect. Let us understand this fact which has been so strangely obscured in the Christian Church. Our union with God must be exactly the same as Christ's. It must be as personal as his was, and all that it meant to him it must mean to

us; otherwise our union with God will never do for us what union with God did for Christ. The relationship must be the same for us if its fruit is to be the same in us. Those who make Christ's fellowship with his Father unique and peculiar take away from all others all hope of sharing its blessed fruit. Indeed they divest Christ of all power to save others. Jesus declared that his Kingdom was open to all men, that all might enjoy his relationship to the Heavenly Father. This was his Gospel, his good news of a personal relationship of the soul to God, such as he enjoyed. If such fellowship with God as Christ had is open to all men, then all men must be divine as he was divine; must be of the God substance as he was, though not at first in the same degree. All men may unite with God as Christ united with Him because all, like him, are sons of God. There is no difference between the nature of one child of God and that of all other children of God, except in degree. Human nature, apart from ignorance and sin, is the divine nature, as the acorn is the oak, as the egg is the bird. The Holy Spirit and

man's spirit can blend since one is the Father of the other. The Kingdom of Heaven is like leaven and meal because the Kingdom of Heaven is the union of God and man. God leavens man through fellowship with Himself, transforming him into His own perfect likeness as He imparts to him the riches of His own nature.

The Kingdom is a growing relationship, in which all the divine possibilities of man are called forth, developed, perfected.

"And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground: and should sleep, and rise night and day and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

"For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

"He knoweth not how" — how union of seed and soil results in the development of the seed into all that the plant is, from which it came, or how union of an imperfect man with a perfect God perfects man as God is perfect. But we have seen both of these

things done—have seen the soil transform the seed into the plant and have seen fellowship with God transform a man (Christ) into the perfect likeness of God.

This growing and perfecting experience of God the least of men may have, since the least is a son of God.

"And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

"It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: but when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it."

Why does he choose the mustard seed rather than any other? Because it has greater possibilities of development than any other and thus is well fitted to illustrate the infinite possibilties of development in the nature of man under the growing relationship of the Kingdom.

It is, also, the only relationship which satisfies the spiritual hunger and thirst of man.

And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said "The Kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding."

The Kingdom of God is like a king's banquet. It is a glorious truth that the consciousness of the gracious indwelling presence of God is the richest feast that the soul ever tastes. The table of the Lord satisfies the hunger of man as nothing else can. Union with God makes it impossible for a man to feel the depression of hopelessness or loneliness. The soul that is in touch with God delights itself with fatness. Paul, speaking of his experience of God, said, "I have all things because I have Him, even now when I have nothing else." That man who is in conscious union with God has in that union the greatest satisfaction that the soul ever knows.

Multitudes of spiritual souls have been compelled to confess that the growth of their love was faster than their capacity for it. This is what Jesus means when he says of those

who dwell with God that they shall never thirst and that they shall never hunger. Faster than a man's growing hunger for the things of God comes the increase of those things in his soul. There is always a supply greater than is needed. He can never, therefore, hunger since his capacity for the things of the spirit is never sufficient to receive what is already within his reach. God fills the measure of his spiritual capacity pressed down, heaped together, running over.

By giving Himself to us, God gives us the banquet of the Kingdom of Heaven. This is the only bread of which if a man eats he shall not perish but shall have everlasting life. It is the only water concerning which it can be said, "He that drinketh of it shall never thirst." It is the only friendship that fully satisfies the soul's hunger. For one hungers for a friendship that shall be perfect, that shall be ever available, that shall be ever developing, that shall meet every requirement of the soul in all its moods; and only in God is such a fellowship spiritually realized. In all other unions, precious as they may be,

there is something lacking. They are defective in certain important respects so that they never fully satisfy the cravings of the human soul. There is only one fellowship that perfectly meets the hunger and thirst of man: the fellowship of the spirit of God, which is as a well of water, always springing up in the human soul unto eternal life. Millions of men testify that their spiritual hunger is fully satisfied by the experience of God into which Christ has led them. His is the only conception and experience of God that quenches the soul's thirst for God. No God-in-the-making, no impersonal power that makes for righteousness, can satisfy the soul's longing for a personal holy Father.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit, eternal life, and Christ, are synonyms for this Kingdom. They all have exactly the same meaning, the spiritual, personal relationship of God and man as Father and Son. The term *Christ,* with its Hebrew equivalent *Messiah,* signifies one in conscious touch with God. Nothing is more clearly stated in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament than

this, that the Messiah, or Christ, is one who is in personal relationship with God. The king or prophet upon whose head the sanctifying oil had been poured, signifying that he was in touch with God, was a Messianic king or prophet. Because God gave the Hebrews water through a rock, that rock is called Christ. When any man enters the Kingdom relationship of God, he becomes a Christ. Eternal life is to know God. "And this is eternal life, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." The knowledge of God here referred to is not a theory, but an experience. It is to know His as He only can be known by one who lives with Him in the relationship of the Kingdom of God.

A few days before his death Jesus gave his disciples a single glimpse of what the Kingdom of God meant to him. "There are some standing here," he said, "who shall not taste death until they see the Kingdom of God." "And after eight days he taketh Peter, James and John with him and was transfigured before them." It was of that experience that

Peter declared, speaking of the event long afterward, that he and James and John saw the glory of their Master. It was when Jesus was transfigured, by his consciousness of the presence of God on the Mount, that his three disciples had a single glimpse of his fellowship with God, which he speaks of as the Kingdom of God. It was the only occasion on which Jesus permitted men to see him in prayer; at all other times when he prayed he entered into his closet and closed the door. From his nearest disciples he withdrew a sufficient distance, so that they should not see him when he was most conscious of the presence of God. But he made a single exception, and as he prayed his transfigured countenance expressed the glory of the experience of God that filled his whole soul. To the three on-looking disciples the very clothes of Jesus seemed changed by his close experience of God, and his countenance shone like the sun as it reflected the glory of that intimate experience of the presence of the Heavenly Father. Remember that this transfiguration scene is a scene of the Kingdom of God as

Jesus experienced it, on this earth and while he was in the flesh. It is therefore such an experience of God as any man may have who follows Christ into the divine presence, and experiences God as the result of the surrender of his will to Him. I am sure that God will come as near to us as He came to Christ when we surrender our wills to Him as fully as Christ did. If any man would see what the Kingdom of God meant to Christ let him see Jesus in that Kingdom on the Mount of Transfiguration. And notice the glorious fact that in that hour of Christ's experience of God he was also conscious of the presence of those who were with God. Moses and Elias were with him, and Jesus was as sure of their presence as he was of God's presence; they were as real to him as God was. One who dwells with God in the relationship of His Kingdom, may have communion not only with Him but with others who are with Him, both in this world and also in that which is beyond the veil of death.

Many sincere Christians may feel that I

rob Jesus of his glory, that I belittle him whom I adore. If I am guilty of that sin I want to find it out and to confess and forsake it. But my whole being cries out, "Not guilty," and I shall now attempt to show to every open-hearted reader that the very things in my teaching concerning Jesus which may at first seem to belittle him are entirely consistent with my heart's purpose to glorify him with the glory of his Father.

It does not detract in the least from the glory of Christ to hold that he had a perfectly natural birth into the world and that he was made in all respects like unto other men, all of whom are children of God. Jesus desired no glory that he could not share with all men. The fact is, we cheapen him when we represent him as a Son of God in a sense in no degree true of others. What possible glory is there for him in his righteousness if it was all inherited? What credit is there to be given him for his victories if they were all won on a field where he could not have been defeated? The popular view of Jesus exalts every repentant sinner above him, since "there is more

joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over the ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance." We glorify Jesus by holding that he had all of our battles to fight against sin in himself, on a field where he had no advantage that we may not all have.

"But you make him no more than a good man." Oh, yes, I do: I make him a man plus God—a man whose union with God transformed him into the image of God. That union made Christ's nature increasingly richer than it would have been without it.

"You make him only an example—not a Savior." An example but not a Savior to those who follow him? Why, I consider that he saved me when he gave me the opportunity of following his example in surrendering my will to God and so entering into the Kingdom of God. Perhaps you mean that I make Jesus merely a good man? Surely I have not done that, since I have insisted that he lived in bosom union with God, and that no man can follow Christ without Christ's fellowship with the Heavenly Father.

*No, I honor Jesus in representing him as*

*choosing to fulfill the relationship of Sonship to God, which is infinitely higher than holding that he had such relationship to the Father without any choice on his part.* Jesus, I repeat, chose the relationship of Sonship to God. This is his greatest glory, greater than which no man can ever have, and he chose to fulfill his Sonship to God because of his conception of God as perfect Love, Truth and Righteousness. Jesus' free choice of such relationship to such a God shows the great wealth of Jesus' nature.

What would Jesus have been without such union with God? He says, "I live by the Father; doing His will is my meat and drink." We can imagine what it would have meant to him spiritually to have been cut off from the fellowship with his Father which was his meat and drink. "Without Him," Jesus again said, "I can do nothing. He it is that does the works which you call mine.—All that is more than human in me is of the Father who dwells in me.—The words that I speak are not mine but His who sent me." Apart from his union with God as his Father,

Jesus would have been precisely like other good men who do not have that union.

That is what Jesus himself declared concerning himself, is it not? "My father is the husbandman, he cultivates me so that I bear the fruit of His spirit." That Jesus chose to surrender his will to God so fully as to inherit the righteousness of God—that is the glory of the Son of God. He is preëminent in the degree of his consecration to God; in that respect his name is above every name. In no other man do we see such absolute abandonment of self to the will of God. No one's consecration to God has proved so costly. Oh, the wonderful intimacy of Jesus' relationship to God, because of the fullness of his consecration to do the will of God. For the degree of one's experience of God is determined by the degree of one's intelligent consecration of himself to obey God's will. One who, therefore, delighted to do the will of God, making that will his meat and drink, came to a bosom experience of the Father.

Jesus would not have much sympathy with us in our desire to honor him with a glory

which he could not fully share with his brethren. He would rebuke us sharply for our sin in making him equal with his Father. Some have gone further than that and have substituted him for the Father. We do not thus honor the Christ, whose one great mission on earth was to reveal the Father, to glorify Him. Jesus did not desire any glory for himself except that he might glorify God. What, then, again I ask, is the glory of Christ? This, and only this, *that he chose to fulfill the relationship of Sonship to God,* for which his divine inheritance qualified him. We do not in the least detract from his glory by claiming for all men the same divine nature, making it possible for all to share in Christ's perfecting experience of God.

# II

# THE FRUITS OF THE UNION

II Peter 1 :2–11, II Thess. 1 :3–5, Mat. 7: 17–23, Mat. 21: 33–43, John 15 : 1–8

*See appendix, pages 320, 321*

## CHAPTER II

## THE FRUITS OF THE UNION

WHAT are the fruits of the union with God? Jesus says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." "The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control."

The fruits of the Spirit are the fruits of the union of God and man. This union, while it does not at first perfect man, does mark the beginning of the mighty change in him that is to go on if it is not interrupted until he is perfected. God enters into union with man for that purpose. That is His aim in seeking union with man, and that must be man's aim for himself, in seeking union with God. The immediate effect of this union is exceedingly great. Man plus God is very different from

man minus God. The least in the Kingdom of God is greater than the greatest outside that Kingdom.

Experience of God fills the soul with growing love for God. Nature's contradictions torment us with uncertainty concerning the nature of God. At times it seems to be without any other control than man's. Its beauties make us say with Henry Van Dyke, "If God were blind thy beauty could not be," but when we come upon its unsightly ugliness we are tempted to say, "If God were not blind thy ugliness could not be." Some aspects of nature make us feel that God is wise, others seem to contradict His wisdom as we see nature's apparent waste of unfulfilled possibilities. There are times when nature seems full of love, and then again, its revelation is one of seeming frightful cruelty. Men are not able to maintain a growing love for God if their love for Him rests upon what they see of Him in the natural world. The world is full of those who feel that either there is no God in nature, or that He is such an one as cannot be supremely loved.

In some men we come near the possibility of worshipping God. Especially is this true of Christ whose love, regarded as the fruit of his personal union with God, inspires us with love for God. We say, "If God is like Christ we can love Him. If his life is the life of God we wish to live it." Others, also, who reveal the fruit of their union with God, make it possible for men through them to love God. It is in this way that men glorify their Father in heaven, giving God an opportunity so to manifest Himself through them as to inspire men with love for Him. They are God's light in the world. Men seeing them see Him. But men are slow to see God in other men except as they have experience of God themselves. "Show us the Father," those who saw Christ in his bosom union with the Father cried; to which Jesus replied, "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me? Hast thou not seen the Father in me as thou hast seen me live out His life, speaking His word, doing His works? You do not see the fruit of my union with Him because you have no experience of this union

yourselves." I do not remember that Jesus succeeded in manifesting the Father to any man who was not himself in personal experience of the Father. Unspiritual men looked for miracles as proof of Christ's sonship of God, whereas the one proof that he was in that relationship was in the fruit of God's Spirit in his life. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. Experience of God involves vision of God. Jesus, knowing this, said to his disciples, "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Father will not come, and until He comes it will be impossible for you to know and love Him." So it is with the Bible. In vain does one attempt to believe its great spiritual message until one has come to share with its readers its great spiritual experience. Until one is born of God one cannot see or enter into the Kingdom of God. Only union with God enables one to supremely love God.

The God with whom a man comes in contact in the spiritual experience of Him is one whom he can supremely love. When He is come into a man's soul He convinces man of

His righteousness and of His truth and of His love.

The secret of the Lord is only with those who know Him through an experience of Him. He interprets to them the mystery of His Providences, so as to justify them in their faith in His supreme righteousness. The only man of our race who never doubted God is the man who had most of the spirit of God in His own soul; Jesus, in whom the Holy Spirit dwelt without measure, had measureless love for God and measureless faith in God's righteousness. My own experience confirms the truth I am teaching in this chapter, for I have never so loved God as when I have been conscious of my union with Him and of the wonderful fruit of that union. Oh, the unspeakable gratitude and love of one who is conscious of the indwelling presence of God, and who realizes what that presence is meaning to him! How one's whole soul goes forth in love to God when one feels the spirit of God working within him, transforming him into the image of God; when one has the witness of his sonship to God, as he only has who is

conscious of his union with God; when one beholds "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon him that he should be called a son of God!" As the spirit of God in a man's soul convinces him of his sin and reveals to him increasingly the perfect righteousness of God, with the assurance of his own final transformation into all of its fullness, his soul goes forth to God with a supreme affection. How unspeakably grateful one is for the light of God's presence and for the power that one finds in union with Him. The fruit of the spirit is love for the spirit; the experience of God is that alone which fills the soul with love for God. How luminous those words now are: "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by His spirit." Only the experience of God reveals to man the character of God, His righteousness, His truth, His love.

"I have declared Thy name and will declare it; that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me, may be in them," Jesus said. His new name for God is Father. He was the first to realize the full meaning of that name, and to declare it to the world; and for a time,

he was the Only Begotten Son of God, *i. e.*, the only one who experienced this most intimate relationship. It was his consciousness of his sonship to God that led Him always in speaking of God to address Him as Father. "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee." "Father, Lord of heaven and earth." "Our Father." Believing as he did that God had put all of Himself into him, as a tree puts all of itself into a seed,—and had prepared for him the fullest development of all his divine possibilities, Jesus realized that God had loved him as He loved Himself.

Doubtless the time will come when nature will mirror the love of God, but not yet. Now we have to find God in a spiritual experience of Him in our souls, where only one can worship Him as one is conscious of His presence there. There one finds a spirit which will not consent to a needless tear, a spirit that marks the fall of a sparrow. This is a blessed fact to which one may cling in these days when nature and human nature seem to be in league to hide the very face of God. If it were not for this inner experience of God one

would be without God and without hope in the world.

True worship is a fruit of the union. A true conception of God as the result of a true experience of God will so fill a man's soul with love for God as to cause him to worship God in spirit and in truth. The woman of Samaria had never known such an experience of God as this. Her worship of God was ignorant and unprofitable. Jesus said to her, "You worship you know not what." I fear the same is true of multitudes who attend the services of our churches and whose conception of God is not such as to compel them to love and worship Him. Concerning them one is compelled to say what Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, they worship they know not what. Worship with them, as with her, is a matter of belief rather than of spirit. Her mind was taken up with the question of *where,* rather than *how* God should be worshipped. Jesus pointed out to her the only place where one can worship God when he said, speaking of God's spirit, "He shall be in you, a well of water springing up

unto eternal life." It is only as a man has experiences of God in Himself that man is able to worship God.

That worship must not be an outward thing of form and dogma, but a personal and true experience of God in one's own soul. They that worship Him most worship Him in spirit and in truth; in spirit, in that union of spirit where the spirit of God and the spirit of man unite. Not until one has come to such an experience as that does one worship God aright. God seeks such to worship Him. In truth:—in a true conception of God which is inseparably connected with a true experience of Him, which is essential to true worship of God. One who knows God as Christ knew Him will worship God as Christ worshipped Him.

The Catholic is quite sure that it is in his Jerusalem that God should be worshipped, and the Protestant has made far too much of the place and forms of worship. It is high time that these all understand the great truth that Christ taught, that the only worship which God seeks, or that is at all acceptable to Him,

or helpful to the worshipper, is the worship offered by that man whose conception of God as embodied love and righteousness and truth fills his soul with obedient consent to God's will. A woman rescued from a life of shame said to me: "I have found out that God is in my soul, and am learning to worship him there." Her change of worship has changed her life. When her relationship to God was nothing more than a form her life remained unchanged in all its impurity. She continued to live in sin unrebuked, like that of the Samaritan woman, until she began to worship God in spirit. Then she put away those sinful practices which contradict His nature. She could go through the forms of her church worship without surrendering her heart to God, but she found that she could not have a moment's spiritual fellowship with Him so long as she refused to forsake her sins. The Samaritan woman's formal worship of God had no power to cleanse her soul of its corrupt condition. Oh, the state of many of those whose worship shows how utterly valueless it is! Most, if not all, of those who are respon-

sible for the fearful war of Europe are members of the Church of Christ. With their hands red with the innocent blood of their victims, and with the guilt on their consciences of forcing innocent daughters, wives and mothers to submit to worse than death at their hands, they sing the songs of worship, join in its prayers and profess its experience. Plunderers of the poor, rum-sellers who sell to any man so long as he has the price, no matter how much he and those dependent upon him may suffer, Pharisees whose attitude toward their brothers of humble station is one of contempt, all these need Christ to call their attention to their sinful lives as evidence that their profession of his religion is a blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. For true worship always cleanses the soul of the worshippers.

The condition, frightful beyond words, of Christendom today, shows Christendom's frightful lack of spiritual worship. The fruit of true worship is such that it cannot be mistaken. No man is worshipping God in spirit who is not ministering to man in love. No

man can live in sin without hating rather than worshipping a holy heavenly Father. Oh, that you whose eyes are now on my words, you, I mean, Catholic, Protestant, Jew, you who worship you know not what, would pause a moment and listen to the voice of the Son of God, saying: "The true worshipper, the worshipper whose worship is to cleanse his soul, must worship God in his soul in a personal experience of God that shall transform him into God's image, that shall enable God to impart to him all that he worships in Him." The only type of worship that perfects the worshipper is that which Christ experienced and taught. In his name I implore all those to whom worship is a matter of empty form that they seek that direct union with God in which two spirits meet and blend, because one has such a true conception of the other as King of righteousness and truth that his whole will is surrendered to Him. The Father seeks only such to worship Him, since only such worship satisfies His hunger for such union with man as shall enable Him to share with him all the wealth of His holy nature.

Another fruit of this union, as Christ experienced it, is divine love for man, who is recognized as a brother, since he is also a son of God. When one looks upon men in this light, he sees their infinite value, and where one's treasure is, there will his heart be also. Emphasizing the fact of brotherhood creates in one's heart the spirit of brotherhood. Just to say, "This man is my brother, since God is our Father," creates in one's soul something of the spirit of brotherhood. But the love of Jesus Christ for men was God's love for them, with which the spirit of God in his soul filled him. It was a fruit of Christ's union with God. It is a type and degree of love for man that is never found except in the soul of a man who is in union with God. It was God in Christ that led Christ to so love men as to give himself to them and for them that they might not perish. It was not Christ's belief, merely, that all men were his brothers, that filled his heart with love for them; it was the uncreated, unmerited love of God for them, with which union with God filled Christ's soul. It was the love of God for

men shed abroad in the heart of Christ by the Spirit of God. Jesus knew this, knew that his love for men was God's love for them. He knew that he went forth to save men because his Father sent him. He knew that all good works that he did were done because they were inspired by the loving God dwelling in him. He said, "There is none good but God. The works that I do and the words that I speak are given me by Him whose spirit dwells in my soul."

Coördinate with the fruit of love is that of truth. The Spirit of God is also the Spirit of Truth. There is no variableness or shadow of turning in our Heavenly Father. "Let God be true, though every man be a liar." There is no darkness of falsehood in Him. Union with him, therefore, brings to the soul a growing vision of truth. "And when He is come, He will lead you into all truth," our Lord said.

As men yield themselves to God, making His love supreme, they are freed from all those things that blind them to truth. Their attitude toward God becomes their attitude

toward truth. Their soul is full of His light if their motive is that of love. They see truth when their hearts are filled with God's love. Guided by the inner light of love men see error as they could not otherwise see it and are led into truth as they could not otherwise find it. The clearness of their spiritual vision is determined by the completeness of their union with God. He is never able to reveal all of His truth to any man, but increasingly He enlightens men concerning His purpose of love. Jesus declares that one who is guided by the Holy Spirit shall have the light of life, *i. e.,* the light of love.

Another fruit of this union is righteousness. "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more." Union with God results in the revelation to man of God's righteousness. What the sun is to the eye, God is to the conscience. Without vital union with Him conception of His righteousness is as impossible as is vision of the world to the man whose eye is not related to the

light. Blindness to the righteousness of God is inevitable in the case of every man who is not like Jesus Christ, in the Kingdom relationship to God. Nature cannot reveal the righteousness of God, since nature is as yet imperfect. Neither can man make that revelation, since his righteousness, at best, is incomplete. But the fruit of conscious relationship to God is that His righteousness is manifested in His son. One of the surest evidences of the presence of God is a quickened conscience.

The righteousness of God is the righteousness of love, and the righteousness of truth. So Jesus Christ taught. No righteousness that is not of truth and love is the righteousness of the Kingdom of God. Nothing is righteous as God is righteous, except it be true. Men do not gather figs of brambles; no more can they gather righteousness from error, or from hate. In these days, when falsehood is supposed, in many cases, to promote righteousness, it is wise to emphasize the fact, "Let your communications be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Visions of God's righteous-

ness, and power to fulfill it, can come only to those in whose hearts the love of God is shed abroad by the Holy Spirit.

Another fruit of the Kingdom of God is power, superhuman power, the power of God which comes to man through his union with Him, enabling him to accomplish works otherwise absolutely beyond him. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." For the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." "Take my yoke upon you," Jesus said, "and ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." His yoke represents the union of two, God and man, which makes man's heaviest burden light.

Strength for all the work God has given us to do, in overcoming the temptations of the world and in fulfilling all the sacred obligations of our life as His children, comes daily to us as we abide in union with Him.

The man who is conscious of personal union with God has a power that one not in that union cannot possibly know. This power comes, however, through spiritual channels or

laws. Multitudes seek it for their weakness, but in vain. They pray for it but without avail. That they can have it from God they are told, but they seek it and do not find it. Their failure to get the power from God which they need is due to the fact that they do not open to God the channels through which only He can give it unto them. There must be fulfillment of spiritual laws if spiritual results are to be secured. Union with God results in his power coming to men without a moment's delay, when they fulfill the condition of its coming. What are the channels through which this power comes into the human soul? In what does God's power in Himself consist? What is God's strength? The strength of His might? His power is in what He is, love, righteousness, truth. Selfishness is weakness. God is perfect strength, because he is perfect love. He is also perfect strength because He is wholly right. Perfect righteousness means perfect strength. God is strong because He is the Truth. Error is weakness; as is selfishness and hate. God strengthens men by imparting

to them His love, His righteousness, His truth. It is only through these, in which His power lies, that men enter into God's might.

I had a man to deal with recently, all of whose friends, his pastor included, agreed that he was helpless in the presence of temptation to drink, because he was weak-willed. They said, "His face betrays this weakness of will." I knew better. The man's will was as strong as his selfish desire. He was not imbecile, weak-witted, nor physically deficient. He had sufficient will power to get what he craved. When he was made to realize what his sin meant to one who because she loved him most had suffered most on account of his ill doing; when he was brought to understand that his weakness was the weakness of his selfish failure to shelter her from the cruel suffering which he was causing her; when he was brought face to face with the fact that his weakness was not in his will but in his motive he was brought to such repentance of his selfishness and such prayer for God's help as resulted in his soul being filled with God's love for his mother, and in this love he has

found sufficient power to overcome the evil that for many years had darkened his mother's life. The power that this man needed had been there all the time waiting to act through any opening made for it. Power of will for the right comes through love. Let the man love sufficiently and he will have power from God to conquer that which he knows causes his loved ones to suffer.

Power also comes through the channel of truth concerning sin and its consequences of increasing suffering to the sinner and to those who love him most; the truth concerning the rewards of righteousness as they are practiced by one who lives in the kingdom of truth with the heavenly Father. People carry heavy burdens, seemingly crushing burdens, on their weak shoulders to the expressed amazement of those who hear them speak of their burdens as light, and the way they carry them proves the truth of their statement. The burden is light because they bear it in close fellowship with their heavenly Father. The only possible explanation of their ability to carry cheerfully and easily burdens far too

heavy for their strength is found in the fact that union with God fills their heart with love for those whom they serve. To double any man's love for those for whom he toils is to halve the burden of his work for them. Every burden is lightened by love.

An illustration of this fact comes to me in a widow whose gifted husband died suddenly, leaving her with little children to support. Frail as she was, her strength was that of four, so great was her love for those for whom she toiled. Her pale face is before my eyes as the words flow from my pen concerning her. I could never get her to admit that she was weary, during those days when her burden would have crushed her but for the power of God that came to her through her passionate love for her children and for her God. When the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, we can understand these words: "And ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit has come upon you." The reason the house on the rock stood, when the floods came and the winds blew and the rains descended, was because it had under it a solid

rock of strength. Put under a man's will a real motive of love for those who must suffer if he yields to temptations and in the strength of that motive God will enable him to conquer them all.

Another fruit of this union is hope. For "love hopeth all things," and love is shed abroad in one's heart through fellowship with God. Pessimism is impossible to the man who dwells in God and God in him. Growing love means growing hope. Men feel that through union with God, all things, all purposes of God are sure to be ultimately fulfilled. The God of all hope fills with growing hope all who dwell in Him as the branch abides in the vine. The only truly hopeful men in hours of despair are those whose hope is in God.

Peace is also a fruit of this Kingdom union with God, peace of conscience through the pardon of all one's sins, to which pardon the answer of a good conscience toward God and man bears witness; the peace that comes only to one who is conscious of union with God in whose care he knows his every interest is secure; the peace that passes the understand-

ing of all who do not know its secret, which is the presence, power and confidence that God is in union with him; the peace of Christ which the world can neither give nor take away, but which dwells in the breast of every one who is conscious of the presence within him of the eternal God, and who can therefore say, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want, He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He restoreth my soul, Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

As a man removes from his own soul all that prevents him from being at peace with God he prepares himself to live in peaceful personal relations with those who share the spirit of God. How great is the harmony of a man's soul from which the spirit of selfishness has been cast out. There is peace in his soul, no matter how discordant his environment. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," Jesus said, "but in me ye shall have peace." The spirit of harmony within a man may remain undisturbed in the midst of

social relationships full of friction, discord and strife. In his harmonious relations with God the soul is in an enclosure, where he remains undisturbed by the perils that surround him. Union with God protects a man from all those things that create discord in the soul; pride, jealousy, envy, hatred, selfishness in all its forms. Submissive to the will of God a man is able to remain undisturbed by trials, disappointments and sufferings that he knows are essential to fulfill that will in his life. Christ gives his peace to men only as he shares with them his experience of God.

Joy is also a fruit of this spiritual union, a type of joy that is never found where the union does not exist. How deeper than words it is,—the joy of the man who is in daily growing experience of God's love; the joy of one who knows himself to be a son of God, and that all the perfect possibilities of God are being developed in his soul; the joy of fresh discoveries of this growth into God which he sees daily. I shall never forget the experience of joy of discovering some of these fruits

of union in my own soul, the joy of seeing the vision of truth grow clearer, the joy of realizing that the righteousness of God is growing greater, the joy of experiencing a growing love of God in one's heart. Who can put into words a sufficient expression of the experience of joy that a man has in his service to others, as he shares with them to the full his every-growing experience of the Kingdom of God, who daily realizes that through fellowship with God he has more to give, with more to follow, that shall make a larger giving possible, and that this increase of love for larger service is to go on forevermore. There is no joy like his. The pleasure of one who knows that his natural wealth is increasing is nothing to the joy of one who knows that he is laying up treasure of love and righteousness and joy for all those with whom he is associated. What shall I say of the joy that one finds in thus giving love, as one puts it into expression increasingly, in practical service of word or deed for those whose need for such service is greatest? How happy one is made by the returns that come from such giving,

filling his heart with joy of heaven. "My joy I give unto you," Christ said. His joy was the joy of his experience of God's love and of sharing it with others.

A letter came to me full of words that were such as to embitter my soul against their unkind and unjust writer. I had a clear case of being sinned against in a matter very costly to me, much more so than I could afford. Until very recently such a letter would have filled my heart with sadness, if not with anger. But I escaped all such misery by a simple word of prayer for love for the writer, which came as soon as the prayer was uttered, filling my heart with such tender compassion for him and with such a purpose to manifest God's love to him as should cause him to escape from the evil spirit that had made him wrong me.

The child of God in whose heart dwells the love of God for sinful men has the joy of leading those who sin against him to repentance. Oh, the exquisite pleasure one finds in overcoming evil with good, in forgiving instead of being burdened and embittered by the sins of those who are unjust and unkind

to him! The pleasure of forgiving one's enemies, even before they have repented of their sins, is one of the greatest the human soul ever knows.

How union with God effects man physically one cannot fully understand, but health of soul is conducive to health of body. Most of our diseases are the results of our lack of righteous love. The fruits of the Spirit are helpful to the body as well as to the mind. Weak nerves are often conquered by strong love. Abnormal fears yield to deep faith in God's presence.

Other fruits of this union we need not here mention. It is enough to say that from God, through the union with Him, we may receive every good and perfect thing in an increasing measure, until, if we abide in union with Him, through that union we shall enter into all of His fulness.

Just one word more: Jesus never imagined that he needed to seek long for the things of God. He realized that they were always within his reach, and that they would be given him as freely as he needed them, and as fully

as he was prepared to receive them. When one proves that he desires more love for services by using what love he has, more love will be given him. Using what he has must go with prayer for more, and that prayer is never for a moment left unanswered. So with truth and righteousness. When a man lives and teaches what he has and asks more he will find it ready for him. Giving must go with asking. Rightly using a gift of God must go with prayer for more of the same gift; and the receiving will continue as long as the giving continues, for with what measure a man measures unto others, with that measure it shall be given to him again, good measure, heaped together, pressed down, running over. If, therefore, one prays for more love, let him not use the vain repetitions of the man who is not using what love he has, since such prayers are fruitless. There is never any need to ask God twice for what he is more willing to give than we are to receive. To him that hath shall be given so long as he continues to give as freely as he has received.

# III

# THE DOOR OF THE KINGDOM

John 10 : 9, John 3 : 1–11, Luke 13 : 23–29, I Cor. 1 : 9, 10, Gal. 5 : 19–21, Eph. 5 : 5, Rev. 3 : 19–21, Mat. 6 : 9–13, Mat. 4 : 7–12, Mat. 23 : 23–28, Mat. 5 : 19, 20

*See appendix, pages 321, 322, 323*

## CHAPTER III

## THE DOOR OF THE KINGDOM

Our Lord found in his day that those who were supposed to be guides to the Kingdom were blind to its very existence. "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the Kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." He had these same leaders of his church in mind, when he said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

Jesus means here that everyone who seeks to come to God in any other way than his way is by that very fact proved to be seeking Him from a wrong motive. A selfish motive for seeking God will always blind one to the true way to Him. It was because the Jewish leaders were not willing to pay the price of obedi-

ence to God that they sought a less expensive way to Him. They wanted to steal into His favor by a sacrifice less costly than that of their sinful desires; therefore they blindly offered God the blood of bulls and beasts and birds in place of the surrender of their wills; but they could not thus steal into fellowship with Him; all their efforts to come to God in a way other than Christ's proved fruitless, as all such efforts must always prove. Still multitudes of those who bear the name of Christ are trying to climb up into the favor of God in some other way than Christ's.

Jesus declares that few there be that find the way and the gate by which a soul may enter into union with God. "Strive," he said, "to enter in at the straight gate, for many shall seek to enter in but shall not be able to." These words are true today, of the multitudes that seek a personal experience of God; few ever find it as Christ enjoyed it. How few experience God in His Kingdom relationship! Few there be that find God because few there be that seek Him where Christ said He might be found. The fault is not with God; He

does not hide Himself from men; He is more willing to give His spirit than parents are to give good gifts to their children. God hungers for fellowship with every one of His children more than any one of them hungers for fellowship with Him,—He cannot be content with ninety-nine per cent. of His sheep, but must needs seek till He finds the hundredth, also. He is like the woman who sought her tenth piece of silver till she found it. God is always seeking union with man; always ready to enter into fellowship with him.

Every one who truly follows Christ will be led by him into the presence of God. Whoever seeks God as he sought Him will find Him as he found Him; whoever asks the Spirit, as he asked, will have the Spirit given him; whoever knocks at the door of the Kingdom as he knocked will find it opening to him; whoever comes to God as Christ came will in no wise be cast out; whoever fulfills the conditions of fellowship with God as Jesus fulfilled them will realize the presence of God as Jesus realized it. There is no other way to God than that by which Christ came to

Him. There is no Name but his by which one can ask and receive the Spirit of God. But asking in his name is asking as he asked; coming in his name is coming as he came.

*Here we have to be most careful. Many seek entrance into the Kingdom of God in vain.* Jesus does not always seem to fulfill his promise of serving as a door through which men may pass into the conscious presence of the Heavenly Father. Many who have attempted through Christ to find God confess that they have utterly failed in their quest; that all of their years of following Christ have not resulted in their being led into the conscious presence of God; that Jesus has not proved to be for them the way to the Father, the door into His Kingdom. They do not deny the reality of the religious experience of Jesus, or of others who claim through him to have found God. They account for their own spiritual failure on the ground that they are not religiously gifted. In their judgment the spiritual experience of Jesus is not available to all men, but only to those who are spiritually gifted. This is not the teaching of Jesus,

however, but the contrary, for he offers the Kingdom of God to every man upon the same condition. His religion is available to all who are in a condition to fulfill its requirements.

What is Christ's way to God? Upon what conditions may one have Christ's religious experience? His way is as natural as that by a door into a house. What if a man were to seek the presence of the sun, but not its light and heat? Equally fruitless is every effort that man makes to realize the presence of God while he does not desire and pray for all that that presence must bring of righteousness, truth and love. Prayer for these is prayer for Him. To desire them is to desire Him. Any desire for God that does not mean desire for what He is, can never open the door into His presence. For God gives His spirit to profit withal. Oh, the depth of meaning in this word! He comes only to those who are prepared to receive His light, His truth, His love. Christ found God because he sought in God what God is.

"I am the Way—No man cometh to the Father but by Me," Jesus says. What is

Christ's way to the Father? No one can possibly hope to find that way whose motive in seeking it is not Christ's motive. The way into the presence of God has been represented as faith in religious dogma. Men have been taught that they must believe in the Trinity and in some one of the nine theories of the atonement in order to have fellowship with God. The right to come to the Lord's table has been limited to those who have observed some special form of baptism or some other outward ceremonial. All this is in direct contradiction to the teaching and example of the Son of God, who never referred to any dogma of the atonement, who never mentioned any theory of the Trinity, and who never baptised anybody, or commanded that anyone be baptised except by the spirit of God.

It is high time that Christ's teaching concerning the way into the presence of God, which he illustrated in his own personal entrance into that kingdom, should be made plain to the minds of bewildered men. What is Christ's way to God—to his experience of the Heavenly Father? "Except ye become

as little children," persons of an open mind and obedient spirit, "ye cannot enter the kingdom of God." "Except ye be born of the spirit," *i. e.,* unless ye submit yourselves to spiritual guidance, ye cannot see or enter into the kingdom of God. "For not every one that sayeth unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of God, *but everyone who doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven.*"

Is such language hard to understand? Is there any obscurity about the teaching of Jesus concerning the one condition of entrance into direct personal spiritual fellowship with the Heavenly Father? Hear another word from our Lord on this subject: "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of God." That man who feels himself so poor in spirit as to desire fellowship with the spirit of God in order that he may be enriched in his spiritual life through such fellowship and may at last be perfected, is in a state of mind to fulfill the condition of entering into the kingdom of God. In speaking of his own experience in entering into spiritual fellowship with his Heavenly Father Jesus said, "Sac-

rifice and offerings Thou wouldst not, neither dost Thou have pleasure in them. Lo! I come to do Thy will." As he prayed that he might fulfill all the righteousness of God the Holy Spirit descended upon him. Jesus entered the Kingdom of God when he made God his King.

Every man enters through that same door. There can be no other. Who, then, is your King? In whose kingdom do you dwell? Whose will controls your life? Your own, your wife's, your friends' or your children's? Is your life controlled by a selfish motive? Christ's will was wholly controlled by the will of God. So yours must be if you are to enter into God's kingdom. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." The Holy Spirit must be your King if you are to be in the Kingdom of God.

There is no doubt that Jesus' fellowship with his Father was developed and perfected through his absolute surrender of his will to God. "Not my will but Thine be done," was his daily prayer. Will you pause for a moment and consider how complete was the sur-

render of Christ's will to his Father? I do not believe that we have ever known. It is on record concerning Jesus that he was tempted in every way possible to blind himself to the will of God, and finally, when he could not be blinded to that will, he was tempted to the full to do what he knew was not God's will. Jesus did the will of God when to do so meant loss of all material possessions and the death of all worldly ambitions. He did the will of God against the will of all his friends and relatives. When his foremost apostle sought to hold him back from costly obedience to God Jesus instantly rebuked him as one who tempted him; "Get thee behind me, Satan." And when his mother put herself in his way of obedience to God, he rebuked and for the time disowned her. So fully consecrated to the will of God was Jesus Christ that he regarded as his greatest foe anyone who sought either to blind him to it or to hold him back from practicing it. In the struggle of his soul to consent to do the will of God, when he saw that it was God's will that he be crucified, he found strength for the neces-

sary obedience in his confidence in his Father's love. Is there any doubt in your mind as to Christ's way to the Kingdom of God? Do you not see that there never can be any other way but his? It is the only logical way into fellowship with God, and it is absolutely fruitless to seek any other way.

One who is to follow Christ in his experience of God must share Christ's conception of God. Jesus surrendered his whole soul to God because of his conception of him. It was Christ's faith in God, as perfect love, perfect righteousness and perfect truth, that made him yield his whole soul in obedience to God. Only such a conception of God could inspire such faith in God and lead to such absolute consecration of himself to do the will of God. You will find that Jesus never doubted the righteousness of his Father. He emphasized this faith in his teaching and voiced it in his prayers. God's name to him was holy. To know it was to have his heart filled with love for God. Your Father in Heaven, he said, is perfect and to know His name as I know it is to be filled with His love as I am filled

with it. Jesus entered into fellowship with God through his faith in God which led him to completely obey God. We shall never follow him in the consecration of our wills to the Heavenly Father until we follow him in his faith in God as perfect righteousness and love.

Jesus had an instinct for God such as a child has for its mother, such as a bee has for the honey of the flower. The undeveloped righteousness of Christ's being cried for the perfect righteousness of Him to whom he felt it related. His human love hungered for the perfect love of God. He felt the presence of God's spirit knocking at the door of his being and calling him to fellowship—he felt the larger love knocking at the door of his heart; he felt the larger righteousness knocking at the door of his conscience; he felt the larger truth knocking at the door of his mind. Do not ask me to explain how spirit speaks to spirit. That is a matter of experience and can only be known as such, but we can easily understand how a man who embodied so much of God as Jesus did had a very large instinct for God.

But, you ask, if the religious instinct was trustworthy in Jesus, why is it not trustworthy in other men who seek to follow it into the presence and experience of God? I think the answer is very simple. Men chose darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. For this cause they are given over to blindness, where otherwise they would be filled with visions of truth. The fault is not with the religious instinct for God, it is in the evil channels into which men force that instinct. It is as if a bee, with the true instinct for honey, were in some way made to accept the guidance of one who led it to poison instead. Or as if one could turn the light into darkness by forcing it into a dark tunnel. Or as if one should catch the rain designed for plants and compel it to run into a cesspool. So the wicked motives of men have caused them to invent doctrines of religion that have turned religion from its true course, making it the savour of death rather than the savour of life. Their theologies have been born not of religion but of their false philosophies. The fault is not in that religion which is the sign of man's rela-

tionship to God, but in the theology by which religion has been perverted. All this is important, since it explains why so many experiences of God have been made to bear the evil fruits of fanaticism and immorality. Not pure religion but bad theology is at fault. The religious instinct has been like a flower seeking a chance to grow in the little earth furnished it in the crevices of a granite wall. It has had to struggle for its existence, and that it has achieved any growth is a standing miracle. Its very nature has been contradicted. All this is related to the door of the kingdom of God. There must be Christ's surrender to God conceived as perfect righteousness, truth and love.

There are many devout souls to whom God is not yet as personal as He was to Jesus Christ. They are the great majority of those who are earnestly seeking to live a religious life. They act on divine principles without the consciousness of the presence of the divine Person. Beautiful souls they are, for the most part. Their wills are fully surrendered to the principles of God, even though they are not

conscious of His personal presence. They are the men whom Christ describes as prepared for fellowship with God by the service they have rendered Him, by acting on His principles without thought of Him as the supreme embodiment of those principles. Their love had increased as they had expressed it in service for men, without any thought that in serving men they were serving God. Such men, Christ said, will hear the invitation, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world." So that those who fulfill the nature of God without thought of Him nevertheless prepare themselves for fellowship with Him, and eventually will realize that fellowship in all its personal satisfaction.

One of my dearest friends tells me that he has never yet had the consciousness of the presence of God which is my greatest joy; but without the cheer of such fellowship he acts on the principle of love and truth and righteousness, and as he thus practices the principles of God these grow in him and prepare him for fellowship with all who embody them,

with God and His children. It is as if one should walk in the light of the sun without being conscious of the existence of the sun as an organism. Many dear souls are guided by the light of God, by His love, His truth, His righteousness, without having any definite consciousness of His personal presence.

A single word of caution should be uttered in dealing with this very delicate question. We have used the sun as a symbol of God, and its light or rays as a symbol of His spirit, and the symbolism seems to us to be justified and illuminating. There is this, however, to be remembered, that the sun is impersonal, and cannot therefore fully illustrate what a personal God is to those who experience a personal relationship to Him. The spirit of God is the spirit of a person and is personal in the sense that God is always in touch with His spirit.

Is there not something comfortless in the heart of a man who lives without the consciousness of God? Do we not feel a desire to speak to God and to have Him speak to us? I wonder if there are not times in the

experience of one who is obeying the principles of God when he feels a personal Presence of which he is hardly aware? Really, how far does one go in acting on His love and righteousness and truth to men, without finding out that he is in fellowship with God?

In the presence of great physical danger, where no help of man is available, men instinctively cry out to God, asking His assistance. Even so when one undertakes to make holy love the law of his life one is forced to cry out in his desperate need for superhuman help, for such personal fellowship with the perfect Father as shall make it possible for one to maintain his high aim and deepening motive. One will pray as Christ prayed when one seeks to live as he lived. One cannot long practice the principles of God without being forced to seek the necessary help from God.

A certain scribe said unto Jesus, "Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and

with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

Near as such men are to the Kingdom of God, they are not members of it if they have not entered into a personal experience of a personal God, whose presence they feel, whose voice they hear, whose will they obey. Those who seek to obey the principles of God without such consciousness of His presence are not far from the Kingdom and there is nothing to prevent them from entering at the invitation of Christ.

*But philanthropy is not religion.* No one is in the Kingdom of God who has not entered into personal union with God—into such an experience of God as Jesus enjoyed—a union that is realized in daily prayer and fellowship. Without such an experience of God one may give all his goods to feed the poor, in the largest and most beautiful philanthropy, and yet not have any religion. Whether we agree with Jesus or not, the fact remains that he never

confused religion and philanthropy, as they are confused everywhere today. That confusion is so great that it is almost impossible to make men see the difference between religion and philanthropy. On every hand philanthropy is regarded as religion, notwithstanding the fact that religion is a spiritual experience of God such as Jesus had and which he freely offers to us all. There can be no true religion without philanthropy, but there may be philanthropy without religion.

# IV

# THE WEDDING GARMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Mat. 22 : 1–14

*See appendix, pages 323, 324*

## CHAPTER IV

## THE WEDDING GARMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

HERE is a story that Jesus used to explain why men reject his invitations to share with him his fellowship with God. Such invitations were sent first to those who were bidden. Who were they? Evidently those who had been educated to expect the Kingdom of God, and who should have been first of all among men to enter into it. They were men of property and social position, those whose intelligence and supposed character should have resulted in their instant acceptance of the opportunity to enter into fellowship with Christ in God; but they would not enter. They did not desire the Kingdom that Christ offered them. Jesus said that their failure to enter the Kingdom was due to their lack of understanding of what a feast it contained, of what it would mean of satisfaction to their

souls to enter into a growing experience of it. "Tell them," Jesus said, "what I have prepared for all who join me in my experience of God. Tell them what the Kingdom of God contains that can be found only there. Tell them that I have killed my oxen and fatlings, that I have prepared for them my very best." This is Christ's command to all preachers. This is what he would have us do in presenting his gospel.

Does my reader know of God's spiritual feast that he is ready to share to the full with all who will abide in Him as a branch abides in a vine? As I write I seem to hear the voice of Christ say: "Tell your readers what I invite them to share with me in my experience of God, in His Kingdom of love." There is no feast like that to which God invites us, no love, righteousness, truth, peace, joy like His. There is nothing niggardly, nothing stinted and scant in his feast. God offers his good things in profuse abundance.

But those who were bidden made light of the feast to which they were invited; made light of Christ's experience of God, with all

the wealth of its everlasting treasures. Every man makes light of fellowship with God who does not value it above all other fellowships, who would not go and sell all that he hath rather than fail to enter into it, and abide therein forever. We make light of fellowship with God when we refuse to put ourselves to the expense of sacrificing everything that would prevent us from inheriting it! These men, of whom Jesus speaks as making light of the invitation of his gospel of the Kingdom of God, made light of its value comparatively, compared with their property. They would rather have their land and oxen without God than God without their land and oxen. Another would rather have fellowship with his wife without fellowship with God than fellowship with God without fellowship with his wife. These men asked to be excused from entering into fellowship with God because to do so would require that they sacrifice some things that they desire to retain, or to surrender some fellowships contradictory to the fellowship of God. They represent a multitude that no man can number, of those who wish

to use their property as they could not if they would fulfill the law of love, and of those who are not prepared to give up their social relationships that contradict their fellowship with the heavenly Father. "I cannot come at the expense of leaving my wife," one of these men said. He represents all those men who will not do the will of God when that will contradicts the wills of those with whom they are in close social relationships. These will not maintain a growing fellowship with God when it means loss of favor with sinful men. How many there are who are represented by this man of the parable who would not surrender his will to God at the expense of antagonizing the will of one with whom he was closely related.

In this connection, one thinks of the word of Jesus, "If a man hate not his wife and his property he cannot be my disciple." That word "hate" needs a word of explanation. It does not mean ill-will, for that is never justified by Christ in any of his disciples, under any circumstances, or toward any person. It is rather a word of antagonism. It

indicates an attitude of opposition, rather than one of consent. It finds its illustration in Christ's attitude toward Peter when Peter sought to prevent him from fulfilling the painful will of God. In that sense Jesus hated Peter when he came between him and the things of the heavenly Father of which he did not savour. With the same spirit of antagonism Jesus regarded his mother when she unwittingly tempted him to disobey the will of God. The greatest enemy a man has is that man who seeks to prevent him from fulfilling the will of God.

Those that came to the feast were for the most part from the by-ways and hedges, the poor, the halt, the lame. These were quickest to enter into fellowship with God through fulfillment of His will. They were not held back by wealth or by those with whom they were in social relationships. There was less to prevent them from doing the will of God. They more keenly felt their need of God. They came to the feast of fellowship from which those in better circumstances asked to be excused. I think it will be found that while the

rich and proud join the church, few of them ever join God. If we look for men of true deep experience of God we find them not among the wise and prudent, the rich and cultured, so much as among the poor and humble. In the church we are most likely to find God's saint in some poor, humble soul, whose needs of body and spirit have forced him to seek and find a true experience of God. It is very significant that Jesus found the guests for the Kingdom of God were chiefly those who were called from the by-ways and the hedges, rather than those who were in better material circumstances. There are glorious exceptions, however, in those noble rich persons whose love for God has so filled their hearts with love for men as to lead them to consecrate all they have to the service of humanity.

Among those who accepted the invitation of the Gospel of the Kingdom there are those represented by the man without the wedding garment. In every parable of the Kingdom we find this class. The man without the wedding garment is a man not qualified to enjoy

the wedding feast. He is not fulfilling the condition of union with others in Christ's experience of God. *That condition is surrender of the will to God. That is the wedding garment,* without which no one can possibly have fellowship with God. Without such surrender of his will to God this man without the wedding garment thought he could enjoy the feast of the Kingdom of God, the fruits of union with God. How many there are today, among those who profess to be in the Kingdom of God, who are represented by this man! He is an example of all who are with God's true children, who profess to be God's children, but who have not, like them, surrendered their wills to God. I repeat that that surrender of the will to God is the only possible wedding garment, without which union with God and Christ is impossible. Every man who professes to be a child of God, but who has not surrendered his will to God, is like this man without a wedding garment, who thought to enjoy the feast of the Kingdom of God. He did not understand that the only way to fellowship with God was through abso-

lute surrender of his will to God. He joined the company of the children of God without joining God. When Christ asked this man how he expected to feast with God while he was not prepared to obey Him, he was speechless. I would bring home to every reader the question that Jesus asked the man without the wedding garment, the question how a man can possibly expect fellowship with God, who is not prepared to surrender his will to him?

This man without the wedding garment is characterized as an unprofitable servant. God has no profit in him, neither has he any profit in God. It is a most unprofitable relationship, that of the man who professes a fellowship with God, of which he has no experience. It is the will of God that all such persons be made to realize their true state. "Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." In all of his parables of the Kingdom Jesus shows that union with those who are in union with God will not save a man who does not himself share that union. The tares grow in the same field with the wheat, but are not transformed

into wheat by their wheat environment. The foolish virgins are absolutely unable to take from the wise virgins their fitness for fellowship with their King. Being with the children of the Kingdom did not save those who were not in their personal relationship to their King. So in other parables our Lord emphasizes and illustrates the startling fact that one must have personal, direct union with God in order to profit by union with those who are in union with Him. True fellowship with the children of the Kingdom can be had only by one who is himself a child of the Kingdom. Union with Jesus did not transform his closest apostles into his image. Not until each one of them came to experience God directly as Jesus experienced Him, were they changed into the image of God and so into the likeness of their Lord.

To be with one whose will is surrendered to truth and righteousness and love will do nothing for one whose will is opposed to these principles. To be closely associated with one who is living the life of God will not enable another to live that life, whose will is not sur-

rendered to God. Until a soul is born of God that soul cannot see the Kingdom of God. No spiritual environment can possibly generate spiritual life. "Marvel not," Jesus said, "that ye must be born again, before ye can see the Kingdom of God." Personal union with God fits one for fellowship with all who have such union with Him, that is the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

A word in conclusion. There are three classes of men spoken of in this parable. First, there are those children of the world who frankly refuse to seek the Kingdom of God, because they are not willing to pay its cost. Second, there are those who imagine that they can enjoy all that the Kingdom of God means without paying its cost; and last, there are those who gladly pay the price of the Kingdom.

# V

# THE LIGHT OF THE KINGDOM

Mat. 13 : 10–15, John 3 : 19–21, John 8 : 12, John 12 : 35, 36, John 11 : 9–10, John 4 : 17, Col. 1 : 9–13, John 2 : 8–11

*See appendix, pages 324, 325*

## CHAPTER V

## THE LIGHT OF THE KINGDOM

But this life of union with God is not without certain perils which must be considered. The Kingdom of God is a growing kingdom. In this respect it is like seed sown in a field. For man is a seed of God, and the Kingdom of relationship is the only soil in which he can develop. We have seen how this union is effected,—what the condition of entrance into it is. We have now to consider how it may be maintained, until it shall have completed its perfect work in the heart of man.

This union is subject to the peril of interruption. Many things may mar it. First, there is the peril of misconception of God's will, by which Jesus was confronted immediately after his consecration of himself to do his Father's will. It was not a question with him then as to his purpose to obey God; his aim in that direction was fixed. But immedi-

ately he experienced great difficulty in discovering what that will was.

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil and was with the wild beasts; and when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him into the holy city, and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and, on their hands they shall bear thee up, lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and he said unto him, All these things

will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him."

The figure that represents our Lord's experiences, in seeking knowledge of the will of God, is very striking. A wilderness, with wild beasts, exactly represents it. For there were on every hand perils of error as to what God willed concerning him, perils which must utterly destroy him if he were overcome by them. These came to him out of what he had been taught to regard as the will of God, out of what his Church taught and what his Bible taught. He was tempted to believe in miracles wrought in violation of nature's laws. He was tempted to believe in the necessity for using wrong means to secure good ends. All through his life he was exposed to this peril of misconception of the will of God, and against this temptation he prayed, up to the very last.

Mankind has always been exposed to this

danger. In doing what they have supposed to be the will of God, men have sacrificed on His altar their children and their cattle; they have wrecked their reason, ruined their homes, desolated their lives; they have found themselves in a wilderness, full of ravenous beasts. He who will consider what the Bible teaches in some of its parts, and what men have imagined to be the will of God, will see clearly that the figure of a desolate wilderness, filled with ravenous beasts, is a fitting illustration of the perils to which every man is exposed who is seeking to know the will of his Heavenly Father.

How did Jesus escape this peril, by which the whole religious world of his day was overcome? How did he know the will of God concerning himself and the race? By what means did he escape the errors concerning God's will with which his Bible and his Church were full. If he had regarded either as the seat of perfect and infallible religious authority, the result would have been fatal to his efforts to discover and fulfil the will of his Heavenly Father.

Evidently the religious world of our time is in desperate need of guidance concerning this matter of the will of God. If a sincere soul seeks help to discover the will of God, where shall he find it? In the Church? If so, which branch shall he consult? The Roman Catholic Church? Is it the infallible religious guide that it claims to be? Can one believe that it is God's will that he believe its dogmas, many of which contradict his reason? And what shall he say when a German Catholic Bishop justifies as the will of God the very thing that a Belgian Catholic Cardinal declares to be the works of Satan? What shall he say while the head of that Church does not attempt to declare the will of God concerning its members, who are putting forth the most blasphemous claim that they are doing His will in violating every principle of His nature? In every nation now engaged in the present fearful European War, the churches are practically united in giving it divine sanction. Evidently there is no infallible guidance as to the will of God to be found in the churches that bear His name.

If we ask the conservative Protestant Church how one shall know the will of God, it refers us to the Bible as the one infallible guide. But the Bible is full of contradictions concerning the will of God. So Jesus himself declares. He said, "It is my meat and drink to do God's will." "Moses gave you not that true bread which is from heaven." Moses permitted men to believe things he knew were not true because of their hardness of heart. And his moral vision was not clear because his conception of God's love was limited. No thoughtful mind will believe the miracle stories of the Old Testament, now that the uniformity of law is understood. Never has it been the will of God that men contradict his nature of love. *We shall never see the will of God until we have the light of the love of God with which union with Him fills our hearts.* To pass from hate to love is to pass from darkness to light, from death to life. Behold the awful darkness to the will of God of the best trained minds in Germany today. See how valueless is the knowledge of the Bible of the keenest German theologians, men who are expert Bib-

lical critics, but who are without a single ray of light concerning the will of God with reference to their enemies. Familiar as they are with the teaching of the Bible, they are living in utter blindness to their cruel violation of God's will, because they are destitute of His love for those against whom they sin. God's righteousness is the righteousness of love and it can never be seen and fulfilled by one in whose soul love does not dwell.

How startling is the illustration of this fact as it is seen in Europe today. But we need not go so far afield for evidence of this great truth since we have daily experience of it in our own poor hearts. The Bible in the hands of a man whose heart is not full of love for men is a lamp without light. Christ's teaching is meaningless to one in whose heart Christ's love does not dwell. You, my reader, cannot see what God would have you do toward anyone for whom you have not affection. Dives, without the light of love, could not see the will of God concerning the beggar dying at his gate, not even as the dogs saw it, in whose hearts there was some measure

of love. The priest and the Levite, fresh from the temple service, could not see their duty toward the dying man whom they passed by the way, as the pagan Samaritan saw it, because his heart, unlike theirs, was full of love. I *tell you that there is no moral light where there is no love.*

The whole Christian world seems blind to this fact that hate is moral darkness. One of the saddest things in the world today is that many sincere Christians consent to be guided by men who are destitute of God's love and who, therefore, are utterly unable to interpret His will. *The will of God is the will of love.* Through that principle only God guides us. Until the Holy Spirit sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts we shall never be able to understand the will of God. Until the eyes of our hearts are opened, we shall be blind to the righteousness of God. Hate is darkness and murder. We see this fact illustrated in the recent *Lusitania* horror, where Germany's hate of England so blinded her eyes as to make it impossible for her to see that she was committing the crime of murder in

sending helpless women and children to their death. "The time cometh," Jesus said, "when they will think they do God service by killing you"—when men will be so blind to the will of God, which is always the will of love, as to imagine that they are fulfilling His will in taking the lives of His helpless children. "All these things," Jesus added, "they will do because they know not the Father, nor me."

The will of God is also the will of truth, which is always in harmony with love. It is never God's will that we believe or practice error. There are those who tell us that love and truth on some occasions are in conflict, so that truth must be sacrificed to love. This is the Jesuitical error against which we must be on our guard. To believe and practice truth may indeed involve us in suffering, but such suffering will always be found to be in harmony with the interests of those who suffer. The supreme illustration of this fact is found in the cross of Jesus.

God's will is also the will of righteousness, and righteousness and love are always in

agreement. Many will deny this and offer seemingly conclusive proof that in many cases righteousness must needs be sacrificed to love. Jesus was continually tempted to believe so. His conception of God as absolute righteousness guarded him from all misconceptions of the will of God by which unrighteous men have been deceived. He knew that what was not right was not of God. He saw clearly what the will of God was, because he had a clear conception of the righteousness of God, as the result of his experience of the Spirit of God. All around him were those whose teaching concerning God's will reflected upon God's righteousness. He would not accept as a word of God, any word that contradicted the Spirit of God. When it seemed that a righteous end could not be had by righteous means, since no miracle was to be expected to secure it, then the thought came to Jesus that it might be the will of God that he use evil means to win good results. That was a most dangerous and subtle temptation. It was one of the wild beasts by which Jesus' soul and mission were imperilled and by which both

must have been destroyed, had he yielded. Oh, the whole world seems to have yielded to this horrible delusion that it may be the will of God that one bow the knee to evil to win the world to God! One great Protestant nation has boldly declared that she is doing the very will of God while she is employing the most cruelly unjust means to secure what she claims are right ends.

Jesus Christ was not deceived by this plea as it came to him increasingly throughout his whole life. His faith in the righteousness of God was such as to protect him fully from it; he would not believe that it was ever the will of God that anyone, under any circumstances, or for any reason, practice unrighteousness. He did not believe that right ends are secured by wrong means; that men gather figs of thorns, or that God is ever under necessity of consenting to a lesser evil in order to prevent a greater one. Jesus would not believe that a righteous God is ever moved by an unrighteous motive or method or thought; therefore he escaped all those misconceptions of God's will by which others were deluded because the

God they worshipped was not holy. Never has the world seen a man so fully tested as Christ was in his faith in the righteousness of God. He, more than all others, had reason to doubt the final triumph of righteousness through the sole use of righteous means, but his faith in God did not falter. "Every plant," he cried, which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." And, again, in the very day in which he was to be crucified he had such magnificent confidence in the ultimate triumph of the righteousness of God as enabled him to declare, "I will yet draw all men unto me." Jesus believed that the unrighteous means men were making to defeat righteousness would result in enthroning it. His sublime faith in the righteousness of God, of which he had a witness in his own soul in the presence of the Spirit of God, enabled him to escape all the temptations that appealed to him to pervert the will of God. In a word, I repeat that Jesus knew the will of God because he knew the character of God, which he knew because he was filled with the Spirit of God. Only as we share his spiritual experience of God

shall we have any hope whatever of discerning the will of God as he discerned it.

One word more. Jesus did not believe that it was the will of God that exceptions be made to any of the laws of God. They were all wisely ordained and it was necessary that their uniformity be maintained in order that their wise purposes be fulfilled. Jesus would not make any exceptions for himself that he would not make for all others similarly circumstanced. He repelled the idea that because he was the Son of God he was free from the necessity for obeying the Laws of God. He refused to consent to the idea that he could get his bread in any less costly way than others got theirs, or that a miracle would be wrought for his protection from death that would not be wrought for all others in like peril.

He had no idea that God's love for him was so special that God would give him help that others could not have. He considered it his duty to fulfill all righteousness.

It is impossible that a trans-continental train should run at such a rate of speed as to make it possible for the engineer to protect

any persons who, through ignorance or carelessness, should expose themselves to its perils.

You can easily imagine what the result would be if it should be known all along the route that the train would be slowed up to protect anyone who should carelessly place himself on the track. A train run in such fashion would probably get across the continent in a thousand years.

So with the progress of the race toward perfection, which can only be secured through fulfillment of all the laws of God. If exceptions were made to such laws in order to prevent suffering on the part of any who might ignorantly or willfully violate them, such exceptions would soon come to be the rule, and all hope of progress through obedience to laws would perish.

If God were to slow up in every case where suffering must otherwise result, progress would soon come to a dead stop.

It is infinitely better that the train should run uniformly on time, and at a rate of speed consistent with the welfare of all who protect themselves by heeding its signals.

The engineer is not to be charged with cruelty in case of any accident that occurs as the result of failure of persons to fulfill the conditions of safety.

So with the laws of God. It is necessary to the fulfillment of their purpose that men acquaint themselves with these laws, and so fulfill them as to secure their benefits and escape their perils. God's laws are all revelations of His will. Obedience to them is obedience to Him.

Then also there are other perils. There is the peril of the abuse of appetites and passions are in harmony with a growing experience of so that they war against the soul. All these God when they are properly fulfilled in righteousness and love. So stimulating and satisfying is a true experience of God as one increasingly lives it, that one is saved from yielding to the temptations to excess of appetite and passion, which would otherwise overcome him. One who walks in the spirit will not fulfil the sinful desires of the flesh.

Then there is the physical peril. I refer to

the effect upon the mind and soul of unhealthful physical conditions; the feebleness of the will because of one's depleted strength. One who would have true experience of God should obey His laws of the body as well as the laws of the spirit. What these laws are we are coming more clearly to understand.

Then there is also the peril of the lack of variety which results in much mental and spiritual injury. Many choice souls have thought that no one could maintain union with God without withdrawing from the world's amusements and recreations. But Christ did not fall into this mistake. We find him freely mingling with the people in their social life, attending their weddings and joining with them in their feasts. His spirit of holy love led him to interest himself in healthful recreations.

Christ's experience of God is the one great true experience with which all that does not contradict the nature of God is in harmony. The world which the Christian has to forsake is not its pleasures but its spirit of selfishness.

We need an experience of God that shall mean a growing experience of all that is like Him in the world.

# VI

# KEEPING THE DOOR OF THE KINGDOM OPEN

Mat. 13 : 1–8, Mat. 13 : 18–23

*See appendix, pages 325, 326*

## CHAPTER VI

## KEEPING THE DOOR OF THE KINGDOM OPEN

The perils of the growing Kingdom of God are illustrated again in the Parables of the Sower, and of the Tares of the Field. In these related Parables Jesus strikingly illustrates why men fail to enter the Kingdom, or, why, having entered, they do not remain therein.

The Parable of the Sower is the key to all the parables of the Kingdom of God. To understand it opens the way to an understanding of them all. We are in the kingdom of God, having passed into it through the door of surrender of our wills to Him. We have now to consider the perils of this growing relationship—those things which serve to hinder its growth. The man who has entered the kingdom has as yet done no more than pay the price of entering into it. He will

now have to pay the cost of remaining in it until it has made him perfect as God is perfect. He will have to keep the door open, to keep the wedding garment on, to keep his lamp trimmed and burning, to keep his house foundationed on the rock.

The seed that fell by the wayside represents those to whom the kingdom of God was brought near but who failed to enter into it. They heard the word of the kingdom but did not accept it. It did not appeal to them as a thing to be desired. Since they did not desire what they considered it to represent they did not care to have it as seed sown in their hearts. "It will transform you into all that God is," they were told. "Union with Him will change you into His image. It will perfect your character. It will take your errors and evils away." But these men who did not receive the kingdom of God, who would not thus surrender their wills to Him, did not desire what was offered them in that kingdom; they did not care to have God's truth, His righteousness, His love. They permitted their love for evil to blind them to the glory of the love of

God. They had no desire to be purified from their sins. The kingdom of growing righteousness, truth and love had no attraction for them. They would not receive it at the cost of surrendering the evils and errors to which they in their blindness clung. To such as these the kingdom of God is the least of all value. Tell them of any relationship in which they can grow wealthy or popular and they will accept your word gladly, but you can hardly get their ear for a moment for the word of the kingdom of righteousness, truth and love with its personal experience of the heavenly Father. They will not listen to the word of the kingdom when it is preached. They will let anything that comes along take their minds off from it. These are the seed by the wayside.

Do you belong to that class? If so, it is a wonder that you have read so far as you have in my book on the Kingdom. You have less interest in this subject than in any other. Any selfish thought would be more acceptable to you, any selfish relationship would seem to you preferable. Union with God as embodying righteousness, truth and love, is the last of

the unions you desire. Let me tell you something that you do not know. The reason the man permitted the birds to catch away the seeds of the Kingdom is because he did not know its value. "When," Jesus says, "one does not understand the word of the Kingdom then comes that wicked one and catcheth it away." If you knew the value of God's kingdom, you would surrender error to its truth, sin to its righteousness, selfishness to its love. Growing fellowship with God, with its growing experience of love and truth and righteousness with all that these mean of peace and rest and joy, you permit yourself to be robbed of by sinful, selfish desires. Nothing but the love of evil in you can keep you from entering this kingdom. Is evil as desirable as righteousness? Is error preferred to truth? Is hate worth more than love? Look into your heart and see if Jesus is not right in saying that it is nothing but evil there that hinders your glad and grateful acceptance of the Kingdom of God. Remember I have told you that no other seed than that of the Kingdom of Heaven can perfect you; no other leaven can

leaven you; no other foundation can uphold you; no other oil can give you the light you will need at midnight in order to enter the King's Palace and share the King's feast. Oh, if you would grow into all the fullness of God, you must make Him your king; you must obey His word! It makes one's heart ache as one sees the great multitudes of those who are losing their opportunities for rich and perfecting fellowship with God through their refusal to surrender all of evil in their lives. The truths of God, which would make men's lives increasingly righteous, and at last perfect them, knock in vain at the door of hearts closed by blindness to their eternal value. Oh, you to whose eyes these words are come, consider, I beg you, what God offers you in His Kingdom and let go of every evil thing in you that prevents you from at once entering into it!

Then there are those who receive seed in stony places. These are they who hear the word of the Kingdom, and at once, for joy, enter therein. But their fellowship with God is quickly subject to interruption through dis-

obedience to His will; for, whenever disobedience occurs the growth of the Kingdom is arrested. It matters not whether the violation of God's will is through ignorance or wilfulness, the same result follows, and the child of God is conscious of an embarrassment in his relationship to his heavenly Father. It is well this is the case, as such interruptions warn men to seek and remove their causes. It is in this way that men are convinced of their imperfections and sins, since these manifest themselves through the interruptions of fellowship with God which they invariably cause.

Often a man is conscious that he is out of harmony with God, but does not recognize the discordant note. He sees that the plant is withering, but, as yet, knows not the reason. He feels that a cloud has come between him and the sun, not because he, as yet, sees the cloud, but because the light is obscured. This Kingdom relationship is educational. Through it only does God reveal His will to man, whom He perfects by removing all that prevents its growth. For all that interferes with the growth of the Kingdom of God, also

prevents the development of the man who is in that sacred relationship. Both the Kingdom and the children of the Kingdom grow together. Whatever fault or imperfection there is in man mars the relationship; and it is as man realizes that the relationship is marred that he is led to seek and find the thing in himself which has marred it. And so he is perfected through his fellowship with God by the removal from himself of all that it discloses of his imperfections and sins.

Nothing is more certain than this, that what rich soil is to a seed, fellowship with God is to man, that as only the soil has power to call forth from the seed the hidden plant, so only spiritual, personal fellowship with God has power to reveal and correct men's imperfections. As a man succeeds daily in maintaining his fellowship with God and in removing everything that mars it, as such things are disclosed to him, he goes on in the perfecting of himself and his relationship with his perfect Father in heaven; and at last the Scripture is fulfilled which predicts that when every evil is removed, the man who is in this fellowship

will shine as the sun in the Kingdom of his Father.

The one condition, therefore, that must be fulfilled by every one who would be perfected in soul, is continuous obedience to God, through which, alone, fellowship with Him can be maintained. The seed that fell on stony ground represents those who enter into fellowship with God without counting the cost of maintaining that fellowship through practice of obedience to the will of God. Jesus very significantly says concerning these men that "anon, for joy, they receive the word of the Kingdom of God." By that statement he means, not that they have gladly entered into fellowship with God through the door of obedience, with full determination to keep that door forever opened, but that they have sought the Kingdom *solely because of the joy that they thought they would find therein.* "For joy" they entered the Kingdom. But when they found that in connection with the joy of the Kingdom there was suffering and persecution, which they had not anticipated, and which they were not prepared to experi-

ence, their faith withered and died as the seed growing in surface soil is shriveled by the burning sun. These men would not suffer for righteousness' sake. They would not bear witness to truth when fidelity to truth meant persecution. They would not love when to love was costly. They wanted the joy of the Lord without his experience of suffering and death. They wanted his crown, but not his cross. These men are the seed that fell on the stony ground. How many there are like them! In vain do all such persons enter the Kingdom of God. Fruitless are all their efforts to secure its reward without paying the price of the practice of righteousness, truth and love.

The seed choked with the thorns represents those who enter into the relationship with God, and continue to abide therein until they find that fellowship with Him involves contradiction of their worldly lusts and selfish ambitions.

Jesus saw clearly that the love of money would make it impossible for some men to dwell in the Kingdom of God. "It is easier," he said, "for a camel to go through the eye of

a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God." Nothing so surely blinds one to the will of God as the love of money. Nothing more surely holds men back from the practice of God's holy law of love than this selfish love. It is one of the deadliest foes of fellowship with God. Many of those who bear the name of Christ have permitted their love of money to kill their love for man and so their union with God. Men who are not fulfilling the law of righteousness and love in their money-getting and money-spending cannot maintain the fellowship of the Kingdom.

It is impossible also, that one should do the will of God without coming into collision with those who do it not. Persecution must follow in the relationships of life in which we are placed; one's loyalty to God must be most severely tested by the opposition to Him which is sure to develop. Persecution will arise because of the word, or will, of God. So it was with Christ, who was hated by selfish men in proportion as he was loyal to God. Doing the will of God in His Kingdom meant that Jesus was unable to do the will of his

friends, his mother, his disciples; his foes were of his own household, as well as those without. No one was in fellowship with him in his religious life except those who shared his purpose to do the will of God. Persecution of him arose on every side because of the word of God which he preached and by which he lived. One who is not willing to suffer for righteousness' sake need not hope to remain in fellowship with the righteous God, for it is impossible that one's union with God should continue after one has refused to practise obedience to the will of God, even at the expense of persecution from those who are opposed to that will. Many men would be glad to have growing vision of truth if that did not mean persecution. But they are not prepared to pay the expense of keeping their minds and hearts and consciences open to growing righteousness, truth and love, as all must do who are to remain in the growing Kingdom of God. Many of them have no desire for larger truth or greater love. To practice a larger love and teach a larger truth and change one's life so that it shall harmonize with a clearer

vision of righteousness affects one's social relationships in such fashion as to create friction and persecution. Perhaps a wife will not go with her husband into the larger truth. The congregation may persecute its pastor if he preaches a new and larger theology. The most cruel persecution may come to the man whose larger love expresses itself in a larger service to those with whom he is related. One must keep his mind open if he is to remain in the Kingdom of God, and an open mind will mean a growing vision of truth which will always result in persecution from those whose minds are closed. Then one who is to abide in the Kingdom must keep his heart open to a growing love, and a growing love as it is put into words and practice will result in bitter persecution from those whose selfish lives it exposes, and from those whose selfish ambitions it contradicts. One must keep the door of his conscience open to a growing vision of righteousness, but this also, as one practices and teaches it, will surely result in persecution, arising from those who are living a life of sin.

Now the seed that did not grow died. A

love that does not expand withers. To reject the larger love is to lose what love one has. So with truth. It, too, must grow or die. From him that hath shall be taken away even what he hath, if he refuses to consent to its enlargement growing toward its perfection. The selfish spirit, that refuses to accept a larger love when it comes to a man, will take the heart out of his smaller love. A man will lose faith in the truth he has when he makes it the final truth, for it is not that, and if he seeks to hold it as such, he must lose it. From him that hath some truth that which he hath shall be taken away if he will not surrender it to the larger truth when it comes. A man can keep a partial truth so long as it is all the truth he has seen; but when he closes his eyes to the larger truth when it appears, he will find that he cannot longer hold the smaller truth in sincerity. So with love, the love of God. One's love must grow or die. He must increasingly practice it, or it will become an empty form. "Every branch in me," Christ said, "that does not bring forth fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit he

purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

The good seed on the thorny ground is said to have been choked by the thorns; by which Jesus means that a man's union with God must be vital, if he is to maintain it at the expense of enduring all the persecution that will come upon him because of his loyalty to the will of God. No man will ever be called to suffer more because of his obedience to God, to righteousness, truth and love, than Jesus suffered; but, alas, how many surrender the will of God to the will of those with whom they are connected, rather than lose their human fellowship. How few care enough for fellowship with God to maintain it at the expense of loss of fellowship with unspiritual men. When it becomes clear to them that they cannot worship God and mammon, that obedience to the will of God must be fulfilled in their money getting, their money spending, their human relationships, and in all the things of their material life, their obedience ceases, and they pass out of the Kingdom relationship with their Heavenly Father. The thorns choke the good seed. In the very moment of

their disobedience of God's laws, their spiritual life ends. But it is doubtful whether these men realize this sad truth. The chances are that they continue to maintain the forms and speak the words of the Kingdom, though their experience of it has entirely ceased; that they still retain their lamps, after their light has gone out; that they continue to call themselves children of the Kingdom, though they have passed out of its holy relationship. In them is fulfilled the statement made concerning Samson, that "the Lord was departed from him," though he wist it not.

The seed that fell on the good soil and remained in it until it brought forth its perfect fruit, represents those who abide in fellowship with God and are therein purified from all their sins and perfected in every grace of the heavenly Father. One significant statement is made concerning these men that is not made with reference to those who enter the Kingdom but fail of its perfect fruit. And it is this one thing that distinguishes them from other types of Christians. It is the thing that explains their success in escaping

all the perils of the Kingdom, by which all others were overcome. It is, therefore, the one thing needful for all who would, like them, abide in union with God unceasingly and unto eternal life. "They understood the Kingdom." I repeat, this is not said of any except those who through the Kingdom were perfected.

What is meant by this saying: "They understood the Kingdom?" It is a very comprehensive statement, very much more so than we shall be able to reveal. For this understanding of the Kingdom comes only to those who have growing experience of it. They understand the value of their sonship to God, with its growing relationship to their Heavenly Father, through which they partake of His power, inherit His righteousness, enjoy His peace, feast on His love. They understand it as they experience its transforming, leavening regenerating power. They understand it as they experience its growth; as they develop day by day into the likeness of their heavenly Father. They understand it, in its eternal value, as the one perfecting relation-

ship for human souls in all the universe. They understand it, not fully, for they have not fully experienced its power, its joy, its righteousness, its peace, its rest; but they understand it sufficiently to value it so justly as to be protected from yielding to any temptation to sacrifice it for any possible material gain. They understand it as Jesus understood it, when he said: "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" And, as he again said: "It is better for a man that he cut off his right hand, or pluck out his right eye, than that he lose the Kingdom of God."

The one reason that the men represented by the seed which fell by the wayside, the seed on the stony ground, and the seed in the thorny soil, failed to abide in the Kingdom of God, was that they did not have the true aim and motive of the Kingdom and therefore did not understand its experiences. If they had understood it they would have permitted nothing to prevent them from inheriting it. But they sought its joys, rather than its righteousness. They represent those who desire

fellowship with God for the joy of such fellowship, and not, first of all, in order that through fellowship they may inherit the perfect character of God. Such men fail to understand the experiences through which one is called to pass in a growing knowledge of God, all of which are necessary for the perfecting of life. One who aims, through fellowship with God, to inherit the righteousness of God will be content even with his adverse experiences in the Kingdom of God. For he will see that all such experiences are essential to the fulfillment of the purpose of the relationship, namely, that he shall be transformed into the likeness of God. The persecutions that arise because of loyalty to the will of God will have a perfecting power upon him. The sacrifices that he has to make in order to develop that fellowship will serve a like purpose. All things that come to a man in connection with his growing experience of God will work together for his highest good. As one thus understands the Kingdom one is protected from all the perils of sacrificing its growth. In Jesus Christ we see this fact supremely

illustrated. As his bosom fellowship with the Father exposed him to suffering and death he understood that such experiences were to be expected as conditions of his perfecting. He understood that to lose the Kingdom of God would be to lose his own soul, but that to remain in it even at the expense of sacrificing everything which would hinder the development of its fellowship, would be to attain to the perfect righteousness of God. Happy is that man who enters into fellowship with God with a clear understanding of what that fellowship must mean to him, in the way of sacrifice of everything that would hinder its development, and who gladly consents to such sacrifice in order that he may inherit its perfecting love and power. Man's relationship with God, consciously and increasingly experienced, with all of its growing fruit, is such an eternal treasure that all one needs in order to maintain himself in that relationship against all the assaults of evil, is to understand it. *In his understanding of the Kingdom of God, man finds his perfect protection from all its perils.*

# VII

# THE PERIL OF ONE'S PERSONAL ENVIRONMENT

Mat. 13 : 24–30, Mat. 13 : 36–42, Mat. 5 : 43–48, Mat. 10 : 2–12, Ro. 12 : 18–21, I Cor. 4 : 10–16

*See appendix, pages 326, 327*

## CHAPTER VII

## THE PERIL OF ONE'S PERSONAL ENVIRONMENT

In the Parable of the Tares a single peril to which the Kingdom of God is exposed is strikingly illustrated and emphasized. The wheat and the tares are growing together in the same field, the tares imperilling the wheat. Here we are brought face to face with the question of the possibility of living in union with God while at the same time maintaining close relationship with those who are opposed to that union. Take the case of a Christian woman living with a husband who is out of harmony with God. Can they live together in the intimacy of the marriage relationship, the wife maintaining her conscious union with God through obedience to His will, while the husband lives a life of disobedience to that will? Can she continue in the right while he

does wrong? Can she fulfill the law of truth while he violates it? Can she increasingly practise the law of love which he constantly contradicts? Can the two walk together when they are not agreed? Will not his unrighteous life choke her righteous life as tares choke wheat? Or, consider the case of two men in the close relationship of a business partnership, one a child of God, the other without any such relationship to God. Can one persist in obedience to the law of righteousness, the law of truth, the law of love, while the other is disobeying these laws? Or make the field broader and extend the application of the problem to the whole political and social order. Can such a union of the children of God and the children of the world long exist without the children of the world so affecting the children of the Kingdom as to interrupt their fellowship with their Heavenly Father?

We have said enough to indicate the problem and the peril pointed out by Jesus in the Parable of the Tares, a problem which every child of God has to face, a peril which every child of God has to meet. "Shall we gather

up the tares in order to save the wheat?" Is it not necessary that the wheat be separated from the tares? Is not such a separation a condition of salvation? This question has been answered in the affirmative by some who have thought they were interpreting the teaching of Jesus Christ, and multitudes of devout souls have sought to escape the contaminating effect of the world by withdrawing themselves from the world.

But Jesus did not fall into their error. "Let both grow together," he said, "until the harvest." Let no separation be effected on the ground that such separation is necessary in order to preserve and fulfill the possibilities of the wheat. Indeed, he went further, and said that such separation would prove fatal to the wheat: that it would result in its being pulled up by the roots; that the destruction of the tares, instead of protecting the wheat, would result in the destruction of the wheat, both wheat and tares perishing together. In his judgment, and his judgment was just because it was the judgment of righteous love, it was absolutely necessary that the

wheat and the tares should remain together until the time of harvest. And his judgment has been confirmed in every case when men have sought to sanctify themselves by withdrawing from the world. All such withdrawal on the part of men seeking to perfect their own characters has exposed them to a deadly peril of Pharisaism, a peril infinitely greater than the one which they have sought to escape. The wheat, also, has always been pulled up by the roots when an attempt has been made to pull up the tares that imperilled its growth. Not by separation from association with sinful men has God ever perfected His saints. Not by such separation was the Captain of our salvation made perfect. Companionship with men who are not in union with God need not prevent the Christian's union with Him. Nay, it may strengthen it, as one feels more keenly his own need for such a union.

Should there then be no divorce of those who have been joined in marriage in the name of God. Every Christian minister should refuse to give divine sanction to a union of persons in marriage who are unfitted to fulfill

the higher responsibilities of that sacred relationship. But what is to be done in the case of those who are joined in marriage where either party is unfaithful to the marriage covenant, where the union is one of discord and strife, where there is aversion instead of affection? Shall they live together without love? By no means. Shall they separate because they do not love each other? No. What then? Let them love each other. If they are Christians it is their duty to do so, regardless of the sins of which either party may be guilty. But what if one is not a Christian? What if the un-Christian husband lives a life of falsehood, neglect or even adultery? Shall the Christian wife continue in her relationship to him, or not? The wife must not lose her love for her husband. If he hates her, still she must continue to love him. If he despitefully uses her, she must pray for him. If he says all manner of evil against her, she must maintain an unchanged attitude of love toward him. If he should prefer another to her, she may not free him on that account from his sacred obligations to her. If she is in close union with

God it will not be a burden for her to do this. If she has God's spirit in her she will be able to grow in His grace while she abides in union with her unfaithful husband. Her attitude toward him will be God's attitude toward him. Her union with God may prevent her from breaking her union with her unspiritual husband. For the fruits of her union with God are all of such a character as to enable her to live with peace in her soul, even in the midst of the affliction that she must experience in living with one who is out of harmony with God, and so is out of harmony with her. Her growing union with God should mean growing influence over her husband. Her attitude of love toward him should never change. Her motive of good-will for him must ever remain. She will never be compelled to live a loveless life with him, because by abiding in union with God she is able to maintain her love for him. The fruit of her union with God enables her to forgive him seventy times seven a day, and that tends to prevent the union from being broken. Then she grows increasingly unselfish and courteous and thoughtful of his inter-

ests as the result of her ever-increasing union with her heavenly Father. Her patience and humility and gentleness and other fruits of the spirit of God are of such a character as to enable her to escape the necessity for divorcing her husband, from whom she might otherwise be compelled to separate herself. All these help her to abide in union with him, and they give her hope of ultimately winning her husband to the life that she is living with Christ in God. In this union which she maintains with an unspiritual and unholy husband she may feel that God is with her, and that He will coöperate with her as she seeks to win her husband to Him, calling him to pass through such experiences as shall water the seed of her love and cause it to bring forth fruit. She should not desire to free herself from the marriage relationship with one whose sins and neglect wound her to the quick, since, as a true Christian, she abides in it with the hope that finally, either in this life or in the next, she will see the travail of her soul, in the complete cleansing of her husband from all that makes union with him painful. For

this joy, that God sets before her, she endures her cross and despises the shame of her married life. Many of the divorces I know could have been avoided if the innocent party had maintained Christ's experience of God, — a growing experience of love and truth and righteousness. So with all the relationships in which Christians are united with unbelievers. It is the duty of the true Christian to live the life of Christ so fully as to win if possible to that life those with whom he is in close relationship.

The attitude of Jesus toward the woman taken in adultery should be the attitude of everyone toward anyone found guilty of that sin. He declared that no man should condemn her who was conscious in his own soul that he had committed her sin. None of these men who accused her could stand that test. The thing for a Christian to do, who is closely associated with one who is living a corrupt life, is the thing that Jesus did in his association with his disciples. As they seemingly grew worse, association with him increasingly revealing their sins, he grew better. As he found

it impossible to have fellowship with them he did not separate himself from them, but sought closer fellowship with God, so that he might hold them to him, "Being in an agony he prayed more earnestly." Let the better half of all partnerships do that. If the guilty one seems to be growing worse, let the other grow better, in hope of saving him. Let the sins of her husband drive the Christian wife to a closer union with God, and as a result she shall have more of God's love for him. Let the mother whose children's faults wound her soul, let the Christian employer, or pastor, or ruler, do the same, "praying more earnestly." In his union with God Christ found the love and faith and hope that enabled him to keep in union with his disciples, one of whom he knew would sell him to death, another of whom he knew would deny that he had ever known him, and all of whom he knew would desert him. The Master's growing experience of God finally enabled him to change all of these men into his own likeness, and so it became possible for him to have harmonious fellowship with them. He did, indeed, suffer

crucifixion and death because of his refusal to separate himself from close fellowship with those whom he loved, while they were living a sinful life, but he finally won them all from everything that marred their union with him. He tasted death for every man, and for that reason he predicted that he would draw all men unto him. One who will love as he loved will save as he saved. One who will be crucified for those with whom he is closely associated may say, "I will yet have eternal union with them."

Let the wife of the unfaithful husband abide in union with her husband as long as she has hope of saving him. Let her hope to the end that she shall reap in due season, if she faints not, all that she plants in her husband's life; and let her know that all that she suffers in seeking to save her husband will result in enriching and perfecting her own life. When she is persecuted for him, if she endures such persecution in love, let her leap for joy, for great is her reward in heaven, for heaven's greatest reward goes to the person who suffers most to save a soul from sin.

The most hateful union a Jew ever experienced was that which he was compelled to endure when a Roman soldier forced him to accompany him, bearing his burdens without compensation. It was a union into which the Jew was unjustly forced and in which he was cruelly compelled to go a mile with one whom he hated. From such bondage every Jew escaped at the earliest possible moment. None ever thought of going a step further than the law required. Jewish theology did not teach a Jew to abide in such a union after he could break it. None but Jesus ever intimated that one should go a step further than he was compelled to in such service with an enemy. But Jesus, said, "Whosoever shall compel you to go a mile, go with him two." Emphasize that word, "Whosoever." It includes the innocent party in every social relationship. It requires the Christian to continue in a painful union after the law has freed him from the necessity of so doing. It requires him to have the interests of his enemies at heart and not to break away from them so long as he has any hope of spiritually helping them.

To the spiritual wife of an unspiritual husband, Jesus would say, "Don't break with him with whom union is painful and shameful, so long as there is hope of redeeming him." Let the wronged wife, who has full legal right to obtain a divorce from her husband, with whom she has gone a long weary mile, not break her union with him now that she has the legal right of freedom. Let her go another mile. That second mile is the one in which she may hope to win her husband back from all that mars their union, since it will reveal her love for him as the first mile could not possibly reveal it. As she clings to him when he knows she is free to leave him, her love for him will be more clearly revealed to him.

All Christians must follow Christ's teaching and example in clinging to the sinful partners of their social business and political unions in hope of saving them from their sins. They must go the second mile with them in such love as will ultimately bind them together in the eternal fellowship of the Holy Spirit. There may needs be separation, for a season, of mar-

ried persons, but not divorce. There should never be remarriage, making it impossible that the relationship should be fulfilled later. The door of return should always be kept open for the guilty party, who should never be freed to marry another. Let them grow together until the harvest. And then what? Eternal separation, the tares being destroyed? I think not. Rather let us believe that when the final harvest comes every child of God will reap, from those with whom he has dwelt, all that he has sown of God's love and righteousness and truth.

There is one condition upon which men who are in union with God may dwell safely with those who are opposed to God's righteousness and love. If the attitude of Christian men toward those who are not Christian is one of positive effort to win them to God, their presence will serve only to strengthen the Christian's fellowship with God and all the evil results that might otherwise ensue will be overcome. It is never safe for a child of God to be closely associated with men who are living an unspiritual, unrighteous life, except as

he has in his soul a permanent purpose to win them from their sins.

But here we must emphasize two words of caution. First the Christian must not sacrifice his fellowship with God for the purpose of maintaining his fellowship with those who are out of fellowship with Him. Never. If his ever-increasing loyalty to the will of God means that those to whom he is related forsake him, then he must consent to be forsaken as his Master was. He must never consent to practise falsehood, or unrighteousness, in order to keep himself from separation from his social partners. As a Christian grows in grace he may experience growing opposition from those with whom he is associated. They may hate him the more because of his growing righteousness as it interferes with their selfish practices. So it was with Christ. But, like his Master, the Christian must not break with God to keep in union with men who are not in union with God.

If the wife or business or political partner will not abide in union with the Christian as he practises obedience to the will of God, the

Christian must endure separation from them rather than separation from God. He cannot possibly live with them in any consent to their sin. He cannot have fellowship with them in carrying out any unholy plan. The wife cannot live in the marriage relationship with one who is living in that relationship with another. She will have to separate from one who will not separate himself from those things that make it impossible that she should properly nurture her children. And let the church stand by its member, who in her obedience to its teaching remains in the marriage relationship with one with whom she is unable to have spiritual fellowship. It is the duty of the church to make up to her, so far as possible, the loving care that her husband denies her. It must come closer to her because of his spiritual distance from her. It must make up to her much of the love that he denies her. It must share her burdens as she bears the burden of her husband. For the church condemning divorce to fail to do this is criminal; and yet what is the state of the noble women who are living in the name of Christ with

cruel, brutal and unholy husbands? What is the attitude of the church toward them as they fulfill her teaching concerning divorce. Little comfort do such wives get, I fear, from those who should give them the warmest possible support.

A case in point comes to my mind, of a pure woman whose life with a drunken husband was most painful. She clung to him and saved him, and now for many years she has had a most beautiful fellowship with him; but in her time of need her church gave her little financial help and less tender, appreciative love. I doubt if a single member commended her holy efforts to save her husband. Oh, the shameful humiliation she endured as she was sent to charitable societies and by them to the overseer of the poor, with the result that their total gifts left her rent unpaid and with a writ of ejectment hanging over her poor head! You must not divorce him, the church said to her, while at the same time it utterly neglected to stand by her, with needed financial and moral support. Let the church teach that there shall be no divorce only if the church

is prepared to stand by those who practise her teaching.

Another word: — Jesus' saying that the least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than John the Baptist is at last perfectly clear. John's life, apart from close association with men, was the very contradiction of the life of Jesus Christ. The Kingdom of Heaven is a double relationship; the relationship of a man who is related to God as Father and to men as his brothers. The least of these who conquer the world while closely associated with it is greater than the greatest of those who seek to escape the evils of the world by secluding themselves from it. The least in the Kingdom,—in fellowship with God and also in close relationship with those who are not in fellowship with Him,—is greater than the greatest of those who seek fellowship with God without seeking fellowship with men. No one is in the Kingdom of God on earth who is not in this double relationship, which we find illustrated in every parable of the Kingdom of God. The fact is, God cannot give His love increasingly to men except

as they minister that love to one another.

Let it be clearly understood that what I have written on the subject of divorce refers only to those persons seeking to fulfill their fellowship with God in all their relations with men.

# VIII

# THE PERIL OF A WRONG MOTIVE

Mat. 20 : 1–16, Mat. 7 : 21–29, I Cor. 13 : 1–3, Mat. 6 : 22, 23

*See appendix, pages 327, 328*

## CHAPTER VIII

## THE PERIL OF A WRONG MOTIVE

The Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard was related by Jesus in answer to Peter's question as to how much more than others the twelve might expect to receive in return for their labors for Christ. Jesus was pained by this question of his foremost disciple, since it clearly revealed the fact that his motive in serving him was essentially selfish. It was not the motive of the Kingdom of God, the motive that one must act upon in order to enjoy fellowship with his Heavenly Father.

Let me make clear the solemn truth that with such a motive as Peter's no one can possibly have the consciousness of the presence of God, except in rebuke; for such a motive contradicts the only motive on which God acts in all dealings with men. To have fellowship with Him one must act on His motive. Though one give all his goods to feed the poor

and his body to be burned and have not love, it profiteth him nothing so far as the development of fellowship is concerned.

Peter is like the all-day laborer of the parable, who expected to receive more than others from his Lord at the close of the day. He who desires that others receive less than himself will find himself receiving less than the least of those who are willing to share all that they have with others. The least in the Kingdom is greater than the greatest outside the Kingdom. The least thing done in the name of a disciple, in the spirit or motive of Christ, is greater than the greatest thing done in the spirit of selfishness. While the householder offered the same reward, a penny, to all his servants, the all-day laborers received nothing of the fellowship with him which the penny represented. All their labor in the heat and burden of the day brought them no reward, at the close of the day, because theirs was not a labor of love, either for their master or for those whom they served at his command.

This all-day laborer belongs to the same class with the elder brother in the parable of

the Prodigal Son, who claimed that his father gave him nothing, though his father said that all that he had had always been at his son's disposal. That is, his father had desired to give him all, and yet had not been able to give him anything, since he had not been able to enter into the least fellowship with him.

Peter did not realize that it was his motive in serving his Master which would determine his reward in his service. He did not understand that Jesus, while desiring to share all with him, could not possibly share anything with him except as the apostle shared his Master's motive. "How much shall we have who have borne the labor and heat of the day? How much more may we expect than they who labor but an hour in the cool of the evening?" In answering this question Jesus shows how great is the contrast between the least service of love and the greatest possible service of selfishness. He purposely uses for example the contrast between the laborer who had worked all day and the man who had worked but an hour, rather than between the all-day laborer and those who had worked

three-quarters, or one-half or one-third of a day. The contrast is like to that which he made between those who cast large sums of money into the treasury and the woman who gave the very smallest possible gift. She, he said, had given more than they all, because she had given at the expense of a sacrifice which indicated a motive of love. She, therefore, received a great reward of fellowship, while those whose gifts were wholly selfish were not permitted to enter into fellowship at all. The same contrast appears again in the story of Simon who entertained the Lord in his palace and the woman who crept in that she might render her Lord the humble service that Simon had denied him.

Jesus knew that Peter, at that moment, was serving him in a spirit which precluded any fellowship between them; he knew that his foremost apostle's motive was such as to render all of his labor valueless and that at the close of the day Peter would be bitterly disappointed in his failure to receive a large and selfish reward from his Master. Jesus foresaw that the time was approaching when

Peter would be forced by his selfish motive into profane denial of his Master; — that Judas would be led by the same motive to betray him, and that all the others, even those who had enjoyed the longest and closest intimacy with him, would be compelled by the same motive to forsake him utterly. He saw clearly that none of his disciples could possibly drink his cup of fellowship with the Father, since none of them shared with him his Father's Spirit. Our Lord did all in his power to make his disciples see the folly of seeking fellowship with God while they did not share His love for all men.

Contrast the spirit of the all-day laborer, in the parable, with that of his master, and see how impossible it was that these two should have had fellowship with each other. There is a great gulf fixed between them. The spirit of the master is the opposite of the spirit of the servant. One takes no account of motive, while with the other motive is everything. One wishes all of his servants to have all that they need. The other desires for himself that which others cannot have. He who has la-

bored all the day wants all that he needs for himself, but is not willing that others have all that they need. He desires that others, whose needs are as great as his own, shall have less than they need.

Notice that this parable does not deal with charity, but with justice. In other stories of the Kingdom, like the parable of the Prodigal Son, Jesus deals with the true nature of charity, but here the justice of love is the theme. There is no charity in giving all that he needs to a man who has done all that he can. Such is the demand of justice. No matter how little a man may do, even though it be no more than the work of a single hour, if he has done all that he has had opportunity or strength to do, he is entitled to a full reward. This is the justice of love, which is the justice of God, as revealed by Jesus Christ. The one-hour men had been idle simply because no man had been willing to hire them. They gladly went to work as soon as they were offered a job. They were not responsible, therefore, for their loss of time. Their just employer paid them for the time during which they were willing

to work. They were rewarded for what they would have done if they had had opportunity. So God deals with all of His children, never deducting from their pay any lost time for the loss of which they are not responsible. He imputes to us all that which we would do if we could. He rewards us according to our motive and not according to our achievements. In His sight the man who has worked all day without love is worthy of no fellowship with Him, while the man who has worked in love but a single hour is entitled to full fellowship. Blessed Spirit of God! Glorious righteousness of love!

But someone will say, "Did not the all-day laborer receive a penny at the close of his day's work? How then do we say that he received no reward?" Our answer is at hand. So far as his master was concerned he was given a full day's pay, but so far as his receiving goes, he received nothing. That is to say, the penny meant nothing to the man who coveted it for himself, but not for others. Let us understand, once for all, that the man who seeks more for himself than he seeks for others con-

tradicts the very nature of God, and so makes fellowship with Him impossible. The man who is unwilling that others should share to the full all that he craves for himself can never have Christ's experience with God.

But the all-day laborer said, "It is not fair that others, who have done less than we, should have as much. It is not fair to give them so much since they have not earned it." How blind is that man to the justice of God in whose heart the love of God does not dwell! As a matter of fact, as we have seen, the single-hour laborer was entitled to as much as those who had wrought longer, since he had been willing to labor as long as they if he had had their opportunity. They who have the spirit of the all-day laborer can be conscious of the presence of God only in rebuke. Where there is a selfish motive the vision of God's righteousness cannot be, and without vision of His righteousness fellowship with Him is impossible. This explains why we find it so difficult to enjoy the fellowship of the Kingdom of God. One who in a selfish spirit seeks that fellowship will find himself excluded from

it. And how prevalent the spirit of the all-day laborer is, even among those who are foremost among the disciples of Christ! How painfully aware we are of its presence in our own souls! It is the veil of the temple which conceals the inner sanctuary where Jehovah dwells. It is the flesh that must be crucified before one can have Christ's vision of God. God is alive to those only who dwell in His love for all men, a love that craves the highest and best for all, that says to all men, "All that I have I desire to be thine. The penny that I crave for myself I crave also for those who have not had my opportunities. There is no good thing that I desire for myself that I do not desire for all other men." That is what love for all men must say. No man can possibly wish for himself anything that he does not wish for those whom he loves as he loves himself, and no man has the love of God in him who does not love others as he loves himself. The man who says he loves his brother as he loves himself, and does not desire for his brother all that he desires for himself, deceives his own soul.

How much of the spirit of the all-day laborer there is in us all! How often does it reveal itself in our unjust attitude toward those with whom we are associated! How much we seek for ourselves that we are not willing that others should have, even those who are as fully entitled to it as we are, to say nothing of those who, like the prodigal son, should be given it as a matter of pure charity. How much more of material comfort we desire for ourselves than we seek for those who share to the full our needs. Like the all-day laborer we feel that we have a right to better homes, better clothes, better food, because we have had larger opportunities to secure them. "What right," we ask, "have the men of one talent to demand the rewards of the men of ten? or the man who labors with his hands to receive the rewards of the man who works with his brain? Let the man who has labored but an hour be content with an hour's pay, though that is utterly insufficient to secure for him the needs of his body and his soul. Let the honest workman, who does what he can, be content to live in a

crowded and unsanitary tenement, without the necessities of a son of God. He has no right to the comforts which we claim for ourselves. While we are apparelled in fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day in our palace, let him be content with the crumbs that fall from our table. He has no right to our penny a day, since he has not had our opportunities or our strength wherewith to secure it."

How much of this man's spirit do we have with reference to the higher things of life, even the highest! We are not willing that others should receive, like ourselves, their penny of *love,* that they should be loved as we are loved. We want our friends to love us more than they do others. And even so, while we wish a full measure of the love of God for ourselves we do not covet the same for all men. We do not wish others to receive the same measure with ourselves of *joy,* not even of spiritual joy. We seem to feel that it will decrease our joy if others experience the same; that our penny will mean less to us if others have one likewise. We are not willing that others receive, like ourselves, their

penny of *praise,* even though they be quite as fully entitled to it as we are. We cannot bear that they be as highly esteemed as we are. We wish to receive more than we deserve, even though we risk robbing others of their due. We cannot bear to give a full share of credit to others with whom we are laboring in the vineyard of our Lord. In a word, while we do not share with Jesus his unselfish love of God, we cannot share with him his fellowship with God. While we have Peter's unconverted spirit, which led him to ask, "What more than others shall we have?" we cannot share our blessed Redeemer's experience of God.

Jesus is the householder of this parable. He craved for every man all that he craved for himself. He desired that God give Himself to all as freely as He had given Himself to him. He prayed that all men might enjoy all that he enjoyed. He craved for every one the peace that filled his own soul. He sought to share his righteousness to the full with the most impure souls with whom he came in contact. He tasted death for every man. He offered his flesh and blood to the whole world.

There was not a selfish desire in his heart, because his soul was filled with the love of God for all men.

Again, I say, we must have his motive if we are to have his experience of God. Everything in us that is not of love is a contradiction of the very nature of God, and must therefore hinder our fellowship with Him.

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." But what is it to be pure in heart? It is to have nothing in one's heart that contradicts love. That man is not pure in heart who cherishes ill will toward anyone, even toward those who bear ill will toward him. If we would have Christ's fellowship with God our love, like Christ's, must go forth toward all men, the just and the unjust, friend and foe.

# IX

# IN THE HANDS OF THE TORMENTOR

Mat. 18 : 21–35, Luke 7 : 40–47, Mat. 5 : 23–25, Luke 11 : 25, 26

*See appendix, pages 328, 329*

## CHAPTER IX

## IN THE HANDS OF THE TORMENTOR

In the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant Jesus illustrates the fact that without the forgiving spirit man cannot possibly maintain fellowship with God. We have here, again, to be reminded that God's attitude toward us must, also, be our attitude toward each other. Oh, that we might understand this! Would that we might experience this truth which Jesus so wonderfully illustrates in the parable which we are considering, that our fellowship with a perfect God can only be maintained when we forgive one another as He forgives us our debts and trespasses against Him,—the things in us that contradict His perfect nature, and that would estrange us from Him if He did not pardon them.

"Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?"

Peter asked. Peter was always asking such questions of Jesus. He it was who asked how much more than other men he might expect to receive for his service in the Kingdom of his Master. In his answers to both of these questions Jesus reminds Peter of the example of God in His dealings with men, and bids him follow that. With regard to the forgiving spirit, Jesus told Peter that he must forgive as God forgives, that is, as often as anyone might sin against him and repent. It is only as we thus forgive men their trespasses against us, that we are able to keep in fellowship with them. Without the forgiving spirit, husband and wife, parent and child, friend and friend would soon be permanently separated, with no possibility of reconciliation. It is clear enough that the only possibility of long maintaining any personal friendship is by the exercise of the forgiving spirit. And such forgiveness must be from the heart, removing all estrangement. So God pardons us, and so He requires us to pardon others; for if we do not thus forgive men, God, also, will not forgive us.

But if God does not forgive us we shall not be able to keep in union with Him for a day, nay, not for a single hour. Our only hope of abiding in union with God is in His readiness to pardon all of our offences, no matter how often committed, so long as we repent of them. And He is as quick with His pardon as we are with our penitence. He always runs to meet the sincerely repentant soul, for He suffers more than we do when His fellowship with us is interrupted.

The parable that Jesus gave to illustrate this doctrine of the forgiveness of sin deserves the most thorough interpretation. "The Kingdom of Heaven," he said, "is like a king who would take account of his servants." God's attitude toward men should determine their attitude toward one another. He does take account of our every word and deed to see if they are governed by this rule. "One was brought to him who owed ten thousand talents." Probably he was the man who owed his king most, for those who most need forgiveness are apt to be those who are least willing to forgive. Men have no conception of

the effects upon God of their sins against one another. Oh, how He suffers in the innocent suffering of those whose hearts are broken and whose lives are darkened by the sins of those with whom they are related! God has to forgive us for all we make His innocent children suffer, and that is an enormous amount. The figure of ten thousand talents is not too large to represent it. No figures can do it justice.

Many do not see *how* their sins against men are sins also against God,—how God is made to suffer for every sin that men commit against one another. In the first place, His name suffers: men hold Him responsible for all the misery that comes upon the innocent through their relationship to the guilty. "How can I believe in a good God," a man recently said to me, "when I see women and children tortured as they are by the sins of men?" God seems cruel to those who suffer from the cruel treatment of ungodly men. God seems unjust because men are unjust. Every sin that men commit clouds the very reputation of God and is a sin against Him.

And then, too, every sin of men is a sin

against God because it serves to postpone the fulfillment of the holy will of God. God cannot do what He would for those with whom I am associated if I am unwilling to do His will. It is a terrible sin against God to sin against one of His children. Jesus is right in teaching that every man's sin against his brother is much more his sin against his Heavenly Father. O, my reader, let this truth be fixed in your soul now, as your eyes rest upon this statement of it! You have sinned against God to the full extent that you have sinned against men: so God reckons your sin. All the pain your sin has caused others He also has suffered. As the pebble cast into the sea sends a wave of motion to the farthest shore, so every evil word and deed of your life that has involved anyone in suffering on earth has also pained the spirit of God. God has to forgive us all the sins we have ever committed. That means that He has to forgive more than we can ever possibly have to forgive, for no man involves another in his suffering for all his sins, but only for such as may touch him directly and those to whom he is related.

If one could know all the pain his sins have caused and all the damage they have done, one would feel that God would need an ocean of mercy in which to bury them so that they should never again appear. I suppose the amount of suffering our sins have caused is known to God. If, I say, we should have to experience all the pain they have caused, we should have little hope of escaping an eternal hell.

The servant did not understand that he was to do unto others as his master had done unto him. I wonder if we understand this great truth. He did not know that his master would expect him to forgive as he had been forgiven. I wonder how much and how often we would have to forgive if we were to really forgive as much and as often as we have been forgiven. I am sure that we should never catch up, since we are never out of debt to God's mercy, and never shall be until we are perfect as He is perfect. Every day we sin against God by sinning, either by omission or commission, against His children. We are never called to forgive more than we have been forgiven. All

of our sins against men have involved God in suffering, as they have affected His reputation and purposes of love.

I had to pause after writing these words, and wonder if what I had written was absolutely true. Has God pardoned in me much more than I have pardoned in those who have most of all sinned against me? Have I been forgiven by Him more than I shall ever be required to forgive? Is it true that the difference between what I have been forgiven and what I shall have to forgive is represented by the difference between ten thousand talents and one hundred pence? If so, it ought to be easily possible for me to forgive any sin, however often it may have been committed against me. It helps us greatly to forgive when we remember how greatly we have been forgiven.

What is God's attitude toward one whom He has forgiven, when such an one refuses to forgive those who have sinned against him? We must pardon men from the heart, that is, because we love them. This we are not inclined to do. Naturally we have little of the forgiving spirit of God, and for that reason it

is very difficult for us to maintain fellowship with Him. The unforgiving spirit in us contradicts the very nature of the Heavenly Father and makes communion with Him impossible. With that spirit in our heart we can only realize His presence in judgment and condemnation.

This fact is illustrated most strikingly in the parable that we are considering, in which the king most severely condemned the unforgiving spirit of his servant. How bitter was the spirit of the servant is shown by the statement that he laid hands upon one who owed him a trivial amount, and took him by the throat, and cast him and his wife and children into prison. By so doing he brought suffering not only upon his debtor and his family but also upon his fellow servants, and most of all upon his king!

Let us see the great truth that is illustrated and emphasized here, that the unforgiving spirit in a man makes it impossible that he should have fellowship either with man or with God. "O thou wicked servant!" In God's sight it is a wicked thing; not a mistake, but a

grievous sin, for one whom He has pardoned to refuse to forgive others as he has himself been forgiven.

We have no right to permit a man to suffer on account of any sin that he may have committed against us, of which he is truly repentant. We are responsible to God and man for all the suffering that results from our unforgiving spirit. Perhaps we think of one whose heart is full of grief, in which grief those who love him are compelled to share, because he remembers some injury he has done us which we are unwilling to pardon. It seems just to us that such an one should suffer. We consent to his misery, even knowing that it also involves other innocent lives in suffering. We will not release him from the burden and pain of the consciousness of his sin against us. In the language of Jesus, our treatment of the man whose sin we refuse to pardon is as if we cast him into prison with his wife and children. No one but the Son of God has ever sufficiently illustrated the frightful harm that the unforgiving spirit does in the world. The figure that he uses in this parable of such suf-

fering as is experienced not only by the unforgiven, but also through him by those who love him, is not over-drawn. Many a man is thus held in an experience of darkness and misery by the refusal of someone against whom he has sinned to forgive him.

The unforgiving spirit is, therefore, the most cruel thing in all the world, involving as it does both God and man in suffering. You are refusing to forgive the sin against you of one who has manifested his penitence in humble confession and promise of restitution so far as that is possible? Then you are the evil servant of this parable and your sin against God is most heinous. It ought to make it easy for you to forgive when you remember that no possible harm has come to you from any sin committed against you, except as you have failed to bear that sin in the proper spirit. If it has harmed you it is your fault. You might have experienced it in such a fashion as to have been benefited by it. No one can harm us but ourselves. If the acts of others against us result in injury to our souls, it is simply because we do not take a right attitude toward such

actions. We could quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. We could so arm ourselves with love as to render temptation powerless to injure us. Nay, we could count it all joy when we fall into various temptations, because of the attitude that we take toward them, converting them all into strength and enlargement and enrichment of soul. It would be easy, I say, for us to forgive anyone who had sinned against us often and grievously if we were to remember that it is our fault if his sins have involved us in any loss, however much they may have involved us in pain. "Oh," a woman said to me, "how can I forgive the man who so violated his marriage covenant and made my life a hell on earth? I shall suffer in my body as long as I live from his brutal treatment, and my physical suffering is not to be compared with my mental agony. I cannot believe that I have ever made God suffer as my husband has made me suffer." Perhaps not, since much that you have suffered you could have escaped if, in your heart, you had maintained the spirit of God toward your sinning husband. I do not know how much of

that suffering has been the result of your pride or selfishness; but this is certain, that God has suffered with you all that you had any need of suffering. You are in the "hands of the tormentors" spoken of in this parable. "And the king delivered his unforgiving servant to the tormentors."

Such words seem strangely out of place on the lips of Jesus, do they not? But like many other seemingly harsh words of the Master, these are words of truth, that describe the experience of every man who cherishes in his soul the unforgiving spirit. God does deliver all such men over to the tormentors. It is His will that those who permit others to be tormented, refusing to forgive them their sins, shall themselves also be tormented by their own unforgiving spirit. Love is the motive of God in this law, by which a man reaps the misery that he sows; for His purpose is that men shall be tormented out of their sin of needlessly tormenting others.

How startingly true it is that the man of the unforgiving spirit has many tormentors. He is tormented by every evil thing that has been

done to him, whether intentional or not, whether repented of or not. He cherishes an unforgiving spirit toward all who have pained him. His refusal to forgive all such persons makes every one of them a source of torture to him. He is "in the hands of the tormentors"—tortured by every memory of those who have sinned against him, not one of whom can he think of without experiencing pain.

I am thinking of one who has been tormented for thirty years by the memory of a sin committed against him so long ago, which he has never forgiven. Every injury that a man refuses to forgive becomes one of his tormentors; whereas, if he were to freely forgive it, it would become to him, every time he thought of it, a source of joy. The unforgiving soul is tormented, also, by the thought that God has not pardoned his sins against Him, so that he has the double torture of one who suffers because he does not forgive and also because he is conscious that he is not forgiven. Surely such an one is properly declared by our Lord to be "in the hands of the tormentors."

He has to suffer the twofold loss of fellowship: the loss of fellowship with those whose sins he refuses to pardon, and the loss of fellowship with God, who for that reason refuses to pardon his sins. I tell you,—I mean you who are reading these words,—that you will never be able to escape from the hands of the tormentors until your heart is filled with the forgiving love of God.

Oh, there are so many who are tormented by their unmerciful spirit, who do not even know the secret of their torture! "Why," they ask, "does a good God permit me to suffer so? Why is my spirit so depressed?" They feel quite sure that they are not at all responsible for their suffering condition. They need to have their eyes opened to the fact that their pain is chiefly due to their own unforgiving spirit, which they harbor in their own lives. If they would but love their enemies sufficiently to feel toward them the spirit of true forgiveness, their suffering would turn into joy. For it is a wonderful joy that one experiences who forgives another who has sinned against him. It is more blessed to forgive

than to be forgiven. The joy of the man who casts all ill-will from his heart is very great.

Oh, you who are "in the hands of the tormentors," just now pause in your reading of my words and make your escape! Do not remain in the hell of the unforgiving spirit another moment, causing those who love you most to suffer most because of your self-inflicted torture. See, I open to you the only possible door of escape—of escape from torment into joy, from discord into peace, from hell into heaven. Forgive him who has trespassed against you, whether it be your husband, or wife, or parent, or child, or friend, or enemy. No matter what is the nature of the sin, or the number of the times it has been committed against you or the bitterness of the spirit in which it was inflicted upon you, or the loss you have sustained because of it,—forgive, as God has forgiven you. "Yes," a woman said to me, "I will pardon him," speaking of her unfaithful husband, "when he repents and confesses and forsakes his sin, but not until then." But, I replied, you are to do all in your power to lead him to repentance.

You are to love him while he is a sinner, pray for him while he is an enemy. Your goodness to him is to lead him to repentance, making renewal of fellowship with him possible. You are to have the forgiving spirit of Christ, who on the cross prayed for his unrepentant enemies who had nailed him there; "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."

An illustration of my meaning comes to my mind in the case of a man whose whole life would have been a hell of remorse if a dear child of God whom he had terribly wronged, in an hour when he had lost self-control, had not had such dear, holy love for him as not only to forgive him his sin against her, but also to so consecrate herself to God as to make him sure that his sin had not ruined or marred her character. As she entered into the life of God and grew therein, she removed from the man's heart the last fear concerning the results of his sin upon her. She forgave as God forgives.

What a contrast she presents to a wife whose husband has sought in vain, for over twenty years, with deep repentance, such rec-

onciliation with her as would have been possible if she had had toward him the forgiving spirit of God. What the ultimate result of her refusal to forgive him will be upon him I do not know, but of this I am certain, that her unforgiving spirit has tormented her as much as it has pained him, and that it will continue to torment her until she repents of it, as sincerely as he has repented of his sin against her. Indeed, I am not sure which in God's sight is the greater sinner: the man who sinned against her and repented, or the woman whose refusal to forgive him has involved him in untold suffering and fearful temptation. I think her sin, in God's sight, is greater than his. The fact is, according to the teaching of Jesus, the sin of the woman is the greater because her unwillingness to forgive one whom God has forgiven makes God's forgiveness ineffective.

You say, such teaching is too hard for human nature, that it requires more than men and women are capable of practicing. Yes, it is, except as one is in such union with God in his Kingdom as to fill one's soul with the forgiving spirit of the Heavenly Father. Jesus,

knowing this, charged his disciples to pray for the coming of the Kingdom before they prayed that they might forgive as they would be forgiven. Is it not true, that God himself, according to His law, would be in the hands of the tormentors, if there were any soul in the universe whose sins He did not forgive?

We are not to refuse to fellowship with any man without letting him know the reason. This is the teaching of Jesus, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone": then if he repents, we are to forgive him. Or, if we realize that any man has something against us, we must try to discover what it is, in order that our offence or misunderstanding may be removed, and so our fellowship with him be maintained. That is, we are to make every possible effort to enter into fellowship with all men, and to protect that fellowship from everything that would mar it. This is precisely what God does as He seeks to reveal that in us which prevents us from entering into fellowship with Him, and from remaining therein. He does not leave us in ignorance

of the causes of our estrangement from Him, but puts Himself to infinite expense to reveal our faults that they may be removed. By so doing He proves the genuineness of His desire for fellowship with us. He prizes the union so highly as to seek, by all means, to protect and promote it, through the removal of all that would prevent or mar it.

And we must imitate Him in this respect in all our dealings with those with whom we are associated. So far as lies in our power we must live in the harmonious relations of love with all men. At the door of every heart we must knock, seeking such union with man as God seeks with us. There must be no barrier in us to fellowship with any man, if there is to be in us no barrier to fellowship with God. Oh, there are so many who do not see that their failure to practise the forgiving love of God in all their life relationships with men is the reason why all their efforts to realize the presence of God in fellowship utterly fail!

We must not leave this subject until we have considered it in connection with our Lord's words as recorded in Luke 17: 7-10.

"But which of you, having a servant ploughing or feeding cattle, will say unto him, when he has come in from the field, go and sit down to meat, and will not rather say unto him, make ready where I may sup, and gird thyself and feed me until I have eat and drunken, and afterward thou shalt eat and drink. Doth he thank that servant because he hath done the things he hath commanded him? I trow not. So likewise, ye when you shall have done all those things that are commanded you, say we are all unprofitable servants and have done that which was our duty to do." It is solely because of our failure to get at the inner and hidden meaning of these words that they seem to contradict the very spirit of our Lord. One who would understand the words of Christ must interpret them in close connection with their context. He must understand what Jesus intended to illustrate, if Jesus' parables are to illustrate his meaning. We apply that principle here. Jesus had commanded his disciples to do what seemed to them to be a great thing—to render their brothers a large service, to forgive men as often as they had

sinned against them. This, like all the commands of Christ, demanded of his disciples far more than they thought they were under any obligation to God to perform. Lord, they said, increase our faith, i. e., it will require a great increase in our faith to believe that God requires us to practise such teaching.

What these disciples needed was a greatly enlarged conception of their indebtedness to God: one that would make them feel that their largest possible service to man would leave them largely involved in debt to God: so that they should never for a moment imagine that they had placed God under obligation to thank them for any service they had rendered him in anything they might have done for men. The disciples of Jesus needed to understand this truth in order that their attitudes both toward God and man should be right. Do we not need, greatly need, the same lesson? Do we not feel that God is indebted to us for the services we render men in his name? Peter was always manifesting this spirit, from which Jesus repeatedly sought to free him. He it was who openly complained that his reward

for service in the vineyard of his Master was underpaid—that he was entitled to more than he received. Peter considered that God would be in great debt to him if he should do all the things for men which Christ had commanded him. This spirit in his foremost disciple pained the heart of Jesus. He knew that until it was cast out of Peter's heart it would be impossible for him to have fellowship with God. All of the disciples of Jesus shared Peter's spirit, which needed a stern rebuke, and so Jesus said unto them, "Which of you feels any obligation to thank any one of his servants for any service for which he pays the stipulated amount? Which of you does not get all the service he can from all whom he employs without feeling any further obligation than to pay what he has agreed?" And yet, we who thus deal with men, feel that God should thank us for the services we render him in ministering to those who may not have served us. We forget that we can never place God under any obligation of debt to us. The largest possible service we can render him he has paid for a million times over and in ad-

vance. And our debt to him is increasing daily far beyond our power to pay. That debt to God is so great, that if we should serve him day and night—if after the day spent in his vineyard we should yet continue our service afterward, still we should be in debt to him. If, as Jesus says, we were to do all that he has commanded us, we would still be unprofitable servants, we would still be indebted to God for his services to us, far in excess of our services of men. If we forgave as often as Christ commands us, we should still be in debt to God's mercy, since where we forgive fifty pence, he forgives us ten thousand talents. Our debt to God's love is so great that we could not pay it even by adding love for our enemies to love for our friends. Our debt to God's patience makes our largest patience seem small indeed. All of God's gifts must come to us as expressions of his unmerited favor if they are to fulfill their purpose in shedding abroad his love in our hearts.

With thanksgiving, we should make our requests of God. We should feel that we are

unprofitable servants, and that our only hope of fellowship with God is in his abundant mercy and infinite love. Oh, it is so easy, so restful, so delightful to come to God, not by way of attempting to figure out some obligation that He is under to us, but by freely recognizing that He welcomes us because we are His children, having forever a place in His heart.

# X

# LOST VALUES RECOVERED

Luke 15 : 3–32

*See appendix, pages 329, 330*

## CHAPTER X

## LOST VALUES RECOVERED

The Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Prodigal Son are parables that should be considered in close connection, since they represent different phases of the same subject.

He who is outside of the Kingdom of God is like a sheep without a shepherd. It is nearly time that the whole world confess that man needs and must have the guidance of a wisdom higher than the highest human wisdom. In this respect men are like sheep all of whom need the guidance of a higher intelligence than their own. Left to themselves sheep perish. They are dependent upon man, without whose guidance and protection they are powerless to overcome the wolves. So man's wisdom is not sufficient for man's guidance. Left to the guidance of the highest human wisdom the race would soon destroy itself in its pitiful ignorance of the things which make for its

peace. But for a few true shepherds that have come from God at times, the race on earth would long since have perished in utter corruption.

Men are blind to their own interests. They think they are wise when they are foolish. They mistake their defeats for victories. They will give their souls in exchange for money. They will blindly sacrifice the interests of eternity for some momentary pleasure of their appetites or passions. Look at Europe today and see whither the highest wisdom of man's selfish culture leads. Do not say that Germany was led by the spirit of God into this war. That is one of the most blasphemous statements that has ever been uttered on earth in the name of the Heavenly Father. The Kaiser, who decorated the man who wrote "Germany's Chant of Hate," calls himself a disciple of the Christ who said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you." One's heart is moved with compassion as he looks across the sea and beholds the sheep led to the slaughter by those who claim to be shepherds of God.

No one can possibly shepherd the sheep unless he has such love for them as enables him to see their perils and to protect them from them. Only one with the wisdom of God, which is the wisdom of true love, can guide men who do not have that wisdom. I say if the world wanted a new and full proof of man's need of God, his desperate need of someone who is filled with the spirit of God, it has it now in the blindness of the wisest of the unspiritual guides of the nations of the world, not one of whom has seen the vision of love that God's spirit reveals to those who are in union with Him. No one but a man in direct fellowship with the holy God has love enough to gain so clear a vision of man's needs and perils that he can guide them safely. No other love but God's can enable a man to shepherd people, guiding them safely through all the temptations and perplexities of their social relations.

Men who have lost their moral way must be sought out and brought back. The drunkard must be brought back to sobriety; the thief must be brought back to honesty; the unclean

man must be brought back to purity. Only one who is in touch with God will be able to show men their perils and lead them to Him whose spirit can give them the strength to escape. Jesus longed to restore the lost sheep to their fold; to restore husbands to their wives, children to their parents; to recall those who had been estranged and separated from God and from one another. Oh, how many there are of such men all around us, living perhaps in close relationships, but nevertheless lost, so far as fellowship is concerned!

Many of our religious guides are as blind to the will of God as are those whom they attempt to lead. Proof of the truth of my statement is found in the fact that these guides have led those who have followed them into a ditch of corruption. Look at the abysmal state of corruption of our Christendom. Look at the hell of war and carnage into which so-called guides of religion have led the nations. The whole world is in a stygian darkness concerning God's will, because the leaders of the people, both in church and state, have lacked Christ's experience of the love and truth of the

Heavenly Father. Shepherds who have not love for the sheep flee when the wolves prey upon them; when rich and selfish men devour the living of those whose earnings they greedily appropriate. Leaders of the people fail to protect the interests of the people. Hirelings flee from offending the oppressor lest they suffer loss. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He will protect them from those who keep them out of the green pastures and away from the still waters. We who are preachers should beg God to give us love enough to see the needs of our people, both rich and poor, and courage enough to suffer all we may have to suffer in order to save both from their sins.

If we are hirelings, we should find it out, for our life must prove a curse to those whom we mislead. It is our duty, as well as our great opportunity, to lead men into that love of God which is experienced and revealed in love for men, wherein only the soul grows into eternal love. All around us are men and women who have lost their moral way. They do not know what their souls need, or, if they do, they

know not how to find it. They are blind to the causes of their blindness and weakness. They do not understand the relations of the aims and the motives of their lives. They have no guidance by which to so build their lives on the rock foundation that they shall stand the test of the moral storms that come upon them. Perhaps we know no more than they do wherein their blindness and weakness lie. Perhaps we are blinded by the same motives that blind them. It may be that the foundation of our ministry is the same shallow foundation of shifting sand upon which their characters rest. Be sure that we shall never lead the sheep into the pastures of God until we know by experience where and what those pastures are. We shall never have Christ's experience of God until we have Christ's experience of love for men—a love for men that will lead us to see their error and to direct them from imperiling and impoverishing and damaging one another. When we see a man preying upon his brother, and we do not make every possible effort to arrest him in his sin, both for his own sake and for

the sake of those upon whom he preys, we may be sure that we are blind guides; that selfishness has robbed us of moral and spiritual vision. Only those who have Christ's experience of God's truth, righteousness and love are prepared to guide men.

The parable of the lost coin represents in a very striking way a man who has lost his value because he is of no service to his brothers. The coin in its "down and out" condition is valueless since it is rendering no service. The value of a man is wholly in the service he renders to the world. "If the salt have lost its savour it is henceforth good for nothing but to be trodden under foot of men," *i. e.,* that which is not fit for service is, so long as it remains in that state, valueless. Intrinsically valuable as the material of the silver piece was, it was practically valueless so long as it remained out of circulation, hidden in the dust. Jesus illustrates the same truth in the parable of the fruitless tree, concerning which he says: "Enrich the ground and dig about it, and if possible make it fruitful, but in case such efforts fail, cut it down and give it to the fire:

why should it encumber the ground?" That is to say, make it serviceable in the highest degree possible. If it cannot be serviceable in fruit bearing, then let it be serviceable as a heat producer; for its only value is the value of the service it renders, and its worth must be estimated solely by that standard.

After he had fed the thousands, we are told in the miracle story, Jesus commanded that the fragments be gathered up, that nothing be lost. To be lost, as Jesus uses the term, is to be rendering no valuable service to the world.

Jesus changes the figure of a lost man from a lost sheep to a lost coin in order that he may more clearly illustrate the fact that a man has no value except as he is of service to men. The piece of silver should have been of value to its owner and to everyone into whose hands it might come. It was meant to go about doing good; it could purchase something for everyone to whom it should come. So it is with every man. He is like a piece of silver; he may be of some value to all those with whom he comes in touch by his example and influ-

ence; and by his various services for man he can make himself valuable to all those with whom he is related. The value of a man is in what he is worth to those with whom he is in touch. How much are you worth, for instance, to your wife and children? how much to your friends and neighbors? how much to those with whom you are in business relations? how much are you worth to your church or club? to your city, your state, your country? You are valuable in your qualifications for valuable service, but how valuable are you really? How much does your presence mean to those who need your help? Stop a moment and ask yourself this question as to your value. It may be that you are like the lost coin of the text and that you have lost your fellowship with God because you have not rendered the valuable service to men which you were in a position to render.

The coin was down and out of service, lying in the dust. Its owner felt that it was too valuable to remain in that condition; that she could not afford to have its valuable service wasted, so she sought to recover it from its lost

state. If we should feel that way about a piece of silver, how much more should we feel so about a piece of God. Don't be startled by that word, for every man is a part of God; he is also a part of every other part of God. He is, therefore, too valuable to God and man to be wasted. For his own sake he should not be left in the dust. That is where every man is who is not fulfilling the law of service. He may dwell in a palace and fare sumptuously every day; he may fill important positions in his church and state, even the highest, but he is worse than wasted if he is not making himself of true soul value to those around him. You will see this fact more clearly illustrated by Jesus in the parable of the unwise steward who wasted himself (his master's goods) when he so filled a position of service as to impoverish rather than enrich those whom he was sent to serve. How much of men that might be of value goes to waste! How men throw themselves away, their love, their money, their strength, their righteousness, with which they could enrich the lives of those around them! Oh, the power we have to bless that we do not

use—the light of love that we hide under a bushel, when it should be put into words and deeds of service for all in the house. Everyone is to some extent like the coin, and we need someone to find us, in the sense of seeing our value and making us see it. Oh, for the candle of love that will show us the value of men who seem valueless! Oh, for the broom with which we shall sweep diligently until we find the hid treasures lying concealed in the dust of ignorance and sin! We cannot afford to have men waste themselves. They are too valuable to be lost. Think of the waste of men now going on in Europe!—I do not refer so much to those who are killed outright, or those who are wounded on the field of battle, but to the waste of all that the millions of soldiers might be to one another, if their hearts were filled with love instead of hate. The greatest waste of this most costly war is not the waste of money, nor even the waste of life, but the waste of love, and the waste of service. If we are to have fellowship with God, we shall have to take toward lost men His attitude, as it is represented in this parable by the attitude of

the woman toward her lost piece of silver. Her spirit is the spirit of God, without which fellowship with man is absolutely impossible.

I want to tell you my reader the effect of what I have just written upon my own soul. I said, I will increase my value to all with whom I am associated; I will give more love, and joy and strength to those around me, and I will make myself more helpful to all those who come with broken hearts and broken lives to Church House for assistance. Just now I am resolved to give them much that I have wasted, much of love and time. I think the candle of the Lord has revealed to me many a lost moment, many a wasted dollar, much of wasted joy that I could have given to those around me. I should not wonder if in God's sight, if in the light of His clear vision, as He looks into my life, He sees that I could easily double my value to all those with whom I am associated. Is it not the same with you? Ask God to show you how much of you is lost to those who need you. You have no right to rob them of what God has given you of Himself for them. And then

remember that you cannot ask God to make you more serviceable to men while you are wasting a part of what you have already for their service.

Just when I thought I had written my last word on this story of the lost coin there came before me the faces of some of those lost men whose value has been largely recovered. When they came to us, at Church House, they were not in condition to render anyone any service of value. One had committed a crime and the drink had him in its fearful grip. The feeble light of the candle of love was sufficient, however, to disclose his intrinsic worth, which he was made to realize, and which he is now making actual. Oh, how valuable to me and to others is the witness that he is daily giving of the power of God to recover a man's lost value! He is one of the most valuable men in our city, since he is a living proof that a man who once had lost all of his value to the world can recover it all. His value to his wife is greater than it was before he sinned against her. "I wish he were dead," the mother of another said to me. "My

life is one dark night because of him." But this son has recovered his lost value to his mother through his escape from the drink, and now he is the very light of her darkest hours. After nearly four years of this new life he is in a position of large usefulness, editing one of our great dailies. Oh, you pastors and others who know that there are lost coins right where you are, in your town if not in your home, get your broom and candle and by God's grace find and save them! Ask God to enable you to see the value of that lost man, and the value of the opportunity he gives you to save him, the most valuable service that you can possibly render God or man, for which you will receive your pay in an increase of love, with its increase of capacity for loving. One of the most exasperating down and out men, one who had betrayed my confidence a dozen times, one whom I had often sought to help, came to me recently and said, "Well you ought to be thankful to me for what I have done for you." "Why, what," I asked, "have you done for me?" "I have given you a good many chances to save me, and now I am giving you

another." "You are right, my brother," I replied, "though I never looked at it in that way before." What joy these lost coins give us in affording us an opportunity of restoring them to their lost value.

The parable of the Prodigal Son, which closely follows the parable of the lost coin, illustrates the difficulty that God experiences in entering into fellowship with all of his children. What draws one class of men to Him is the very thing that repels another class from Him. The father's treatment of the prodigal, which drew him away from a life of sin into filial fellowship, embittered the elder son's heart against both his father and his brother, so that when one son came to the feast of fellowship which the father had prepared for both of his sons, the other withdrew from it. The elder brother wanted fellowship with his father but not with his brother. He was angry when told that he could not feast with his father except in company with his brother. He was deaf to the entreaties of his father to unite in fellowship with him, because of the presence of the brother. The father craved a

fellowship which should unite him with both of his sons, but, alas, the one son did not desire fellowship with the other, though each wished union with the father. How sad this experience of the father who could not enjoy fellowship with his sons because of their refusal to fellowship each other! That is the experience that God has today, as he seeks union with all classes of men, while they hold themselves apart from each other. The rich man would enjoy his fellowship with God while his heart is dead to fellowship with his poor brother. The Pharisee seeks to commune with God while he refuses to speak to a brother who is also a son of God.

"Thou never gavest me a kid," the elder brother said, "with which to be merry, but thou hast given him the fatted calf." The contrast is between the richest possible fellowship and no fellowship at all. The least is here placed over against the greatest. We see the same contrast in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, in which God gives the fellowship of Abraham's bosom to Lazarus but denies as much fellowship to the rich man as is repre-

sented by a drop of water. And in both cases the lesson is the same, namely, that one who will not enter into fellowship with God in company with others who enjoy that fellowship will find himself wholly excluded from it. He who seeks fellowship with God but is not willing to share it with men like the prodigal will seek it in vain. He who knocks at the door of the Kingdom of God with a selfish spirit will find himself knocking at a door that will not open. Any man who seeks fellowship with God solely on his own behalf, without any disposition to crave it for others, will seek in vain. God will not give even a kid for the feast of fellowship with a man who is unwilling to share that fellowship with his brother. He will not give a drop of the water of fellowship to a man dying of thirst so long as that man wishes it for himself only. So when the father said to the son, with whom he was out of fellowship: "All that I have is thine," he meant to imply, "if thou art willing to share it with thy brother. I offer you all that I have prepared for him, the fatted calf, the music, the dancing, upon the condition

that you share it with him, but I cannot give you anything from which he is excluded."

God help us to see the great truth here set forth; a truth that seems never to have dawned upon the Christian world, in which great bodies of Christians seek for themselves an exclusive communion with God. Many would rather have a kid apart from others than the fatted calf shared with others. The father had freely offered the elder brother all that he had prepared for his younger son, and yet the elder brother declared that his father had not given him as much as a kid with which to make merry. The simple truth is that what this elder brother wanted was something from which his younger brother should be excluded. Rather than share the best that his father had with his younger brother he would be content to have the very meanest that his father could give, so long as he could have it with his friends apart from his brother.

So, God offers all that he has to all of his children, upon the condition that they share it with one another, as he is willing to share it with them all. All that he has he freely offers

to all of his children. He will not give to one that which he withholds from others. His spirit of love makes it impossible that he should have fellowship with anyone who wishes for himself that which he does not desire for others. The very nature of God is evermore in contradiction with the spirit of selfishness, wherever it is found. We shall never have Christ's fellowship with God until we seek Christ's fellowship with men, with all men.

I hesitate to point out the fact that the spirit of the elder brother of this parable which is in direct contradiction to the spirit of the Father is very largely the spirit of the church. Bring such a man as this younger brother, fresh from his life of shame, into any of our churches, and let the truth be known concerning him, and I fear many of its men and women of culture will be angry because of his presence. If the pastor should insist upon giving him any such welcome as the father gave the prodigal son, I imagine the result would be that many members of the church would disapprove that action. I fear that most of those who profess

the name of Christ are still so ignorant of his real spirit that they will not enter into loving fellowship with those who most need the encouragement of their friendship. Their attitude toward their repentant brothers is proof that they do not share for them the love of the Heavenly Father. That man who will not gladly fellowship one who has lived a life of shame, now that he has repented of it, cannot possibly have fellowship with God, for one can have fellowship with God only as one fellowships the poorest man or woman whom God fellowships.

A poor girl, meditating suicide, came to me recently as her last resort for sympathy and food. "I have lied about myself ever since my child was born out of marriage. Oh," she said, "people are so hard on one like me. I don't want to live any longer in a world that will not give me a chance. They seem to shrink from me as if I would contaminate them if they should touch me." I told her of Christ's God and declared that her sin had not in the least altered his relationship to her. It seemed incredible to her at first that God

was like what I said, but at last she caught my vision of Him and her heart rejoiced with a joy that no man can take from her.

O you members of an exclusive Christian church, if you read these words, let me tell you that your church is more exclusive than you think, far more so. When it excludes those who are poor in money or education or character, while it gladly welcomes those whose chief attraction is their money or social station, it excludes Another also and all of His friends. He is the Heavenly Father and they are all of those who are in union with Him. When you exclude the humblest of God's repentant children from your loving fellowship, you exclude Him. Fellowship with God apart from fellowship with those whom He loves you can never have. This is a tremendous truth, is it not? How it explains the absence of the spirit of the Eternal God from many of our churches!

Consider the tenderness of the father's dealings with his Pharisaic son. He entreated him to unite with him in fellowship with his brother. The father knew that it went against

the grain of the elder brother to do this, that it was hard for him, in whose heart the father's love for his brother did not dwell, to take the father's attitude toward his brother. "It is not a mere sentiment that I urge in entreating you to join in fellowship with your brother who has sinned now that he has turned away from his sin, with repentant heart toward God. It is meet" (right) the father said, "that you fellowship your younger brother, for he is not now what he was when he was devouring my living with harlots. Now that his attitude toward such a life has changed, your attitude toward him should change. I ran to meet him, whom you will not welcome now that he has returned. Now that he is living a life of purity you should regard him as though he had never sinned." The attitude of the father toward his repentant son was the attitude of righteous love which his elder son did not share. The Spirit of the elder brother contradicted the very nature of his father, and made fellowship between them absolutely impossible. No man can have Christ fellowship with God that does not have Christ's love for man.

# XI

# WHY THEIR LIGHTS FAILED

Mat. 25 : 1–13, Mat. 24 : 42–51

*See appendix, pages 330, 331*

## CHAPTER XI

## WHY THEIR LIGHTS FAILED

The parable of the Wise and the Foolish Virgins was given by Jesus to emphasize the peril of an interrupted fellowship with God. Union with Him, to be effective, must be maintained until it has accomplished its perfect purpose. That man is foolish, Jesus declares again and again, who seeks the Kingdom of God without counting the cost of permanently remaining therein. He is like the man who begins to build a tower but does not complete the task. His work is wasted since it fails of completion. There are many things that it were better not to begin if one is not to complete them, since their early and imperfect state can be tolerated only because it is a stage toward their later perfected attainment. Fellowship with God is of infinite value if it is to be maintained until it has accomplished its eternal purpose, but not otherwise. It does not pay to be a Christian disciple unless one is

to continue to be one, forever. Better were it not to have known the way of life than having known it to turn away from it.

The Foolish Virgins were foolish in this, that they did not prepare themselves with sufficient provision of oil to last until the Bridegroom came. They were foolish in not counting the cost of going all the way in the Kingdom of God.

A man may get out of touch with God after he has had real fellowship with Him. One may dwell in the darkness of the life apart from God after one has enjoyed the light of His presence. It is not true that once in grace means always in grace. Men may get themselves into such an unspiritual state of soul that it will not be possible for them to prepare themselves quickly for communion with God. That fellowship comes only by growth: first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. It requires the persistent growth in man of love, righteousness and truth, through which, only, man has that knowledge of God without which fellowship with Him is impossible.

One of the most dangerous delusions that the Church has fostered is that a soul may hereafter be instantly perfected when brought into a perfect world and into the presence of a perfect God. All that such contact would possibly do for an unholy soul would be to give him, not a feast of fellowship, but a vision of his corrupt condition; for the first vision of God does not mean fellowship; it means painful consciousness of sin. After that there must follow the cleansing of the soul, which requires time. The method of growth in the material world is the method of growth in the spiritual world. No exception has ever been made, or ever will be. The time element in growth cannot be ignored. No, the soul cannot be instantly purified of its sins and so prepared for the joys of the perfect life in the perfect world. Jesus warned men of this fact, lest they find themselves at last excluded from the feast for which they had failed to prepare themselves.

The marriage feast did not come when the Foolish Virgins expected it. They therefore grew weary of waiting for it. Slowly the

darkness of the night deepened without any sign of the bridegroom's approach. At last, all hope of his coming died out in the hearts of the Foolish Virgins. But not so with the Wise Virgins. They had anticipated such a delay. They had wisely concluded that they might need oil for a longer time than the Foolish Virgins thought possible. They anticipated the dark and weary hours that might pass before the bridegroom's return. They were like the wise man who built his house upon a rock in anticipation of the coming of storms that would overthrow it unless it had such a foundation; or, like the man represented by the good seed in the parable of the Sower, who understood that to abide in a growing relationship with God one must be prepared to experience all that might be required to perfect one's soul.

From the start the Wise Virgins prepared themselves for the dark hours of their experience in the growing Kingdom of God, understanding that such hours were necessary to such development of the graces of God's Holy Spirit in their hearts as would make it possible

for them to enter into a large feast of fellowship with Him. They wisely understood that a large work of correction and development would be necessary before it would be possible for them to enter into perfect fellowship with their Heavenly Father. They understood the teaching of Jesus, that fellowship with God is at first a purifying experience, involving suffering; that it is a growth, "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." They had the light to see this. They did not lose hope of the feast, because they knew that its coming was delayed in order that they might prepare themselves for it. The Foolish Virgins did not see this. They did not see the necessity for such preparation of themselves for perfect fellowship with God. *They did not understand that they were responsible for the delay of their Master's coming—that He was waiting for them to prepare for His coming.*

I fear that we, too, are blind to the fact that if any good gift of God is withheld from us, it is solely because we are not yet prepared to receive it. We foolishly expect the feast, be-

fore we are prepared for it; and because it does not come we lose hope of its coming. We do not understand that our Master delays His coming in most merciful love, to give us an opportunity to prepare ourselves to enter into the feast which he has made ready for us.

The Foolish Virgins should have asked *why* their Lord delayed his coming. It was their fatal mistake that they did not do this. They said, "The Lord delayeth his coming," without any thought of inquiring as to the cause of his delay. All of his delay in coming went for nothing with them because they misinterpreted its purpose, seeing in it a fault in him and not a necessity for preparation in themselves. Fatal mistake! resulting in their loss of all expectation of a feast of fellowship with Christ. The effect was that what should have proved a means of grace to the Foolish Virgins proved their utter ruin. They should have said, "He is tarrying in mercy, to allow us time to prepare ourselves for his coming. He is giving us such work to do for men in their dark hours as shall develop a larger love for them and him. He is waiting for us to see and

correct our selfish motives and low aims, that these may not prove a barrier to fellowship with him. He is coming as soon as we are ready." Instead, they said, "There is no reason why we should be kept waiting for the feast which the Bridegroom promised." It seems never for a moment to have occurred to them that they were not ready for the joy for which they looked.

And I fear we are now as foolish as they were—foolish in this, that we are seeking perfect fellowship with God without any intelligent conception of the work that must be done in our minds and hearts before our desire can possibly be realized. We make the mistake of the Foolish Virgins, supposing that the gifts of God can exceed our capacity to receive them. Men foolishly imagine that God can put an ocean of joy into a pint-heart.

If we are never to lose our love for God, we must never lose our faith in His love for us. We must see His love in all the dark and painful experiences through which He calls us to pass, as we feel that these are all necessary for our preparation for the experience of His

highest joy. We must see the purpose of love in our fiery trials, through which God is at work purifying our souls, as well as in the joy that comes to us after our souls have been purified. We must appreciate not only the goodness of God in giving us the fruit of the spirit, but also His goodness in all those painful experiences which result in developing those fruits in our souls. Only one who thus interprets the providences of God will see the love of God manifested in them all. If the feast we hunger for does not come till midnight, we shall realize that God's love has prepared it for us at the earliest possible moment —as soon as we were prepared for it.

Let it once seem to the dearest hearts that God has ceased to love them and their love for men will suffer most frightfully. When we feel that we are loved of God, it is easy enough to love men; even to love those who have no other claim upon us than we have upon God. But when in our darkest hours God does not come to our relief; when the weary night of our distress goes on until midnight and there is no sign of His coming, with the result that we

cease expecting Him, we lose our faith in His love and the light of our love for men goes out.

Very striking is the fact that Jesus emphasized in his parable that our unselfish love for men is dependent upon our experience of God's love for us. We sleep in our ministry of men when we feel that God sleeps in His care of us. Then our vision and works of love cease, for then we see no purpose in any fellowship or even in life itself. Then, as St. Paul says, our hearts say, "Let us eat and drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die."

Evidently the Foolish Virgins had counted upon their ability to obtain the needed preparation to meet the Bridegroom when the moment should come to enter into his presence. That was their fatal mistake, the mistake which multitudes are making today. They supposed that they could then get the oil they needed from their wiser companions; that they could then borrow their way into the joy of their King; that they could enter into union with him on the basis of the love of others, imputed to them. Evidently they were believers in the theory of imputed righteous-

ness, which has been taught by the Church for centuries, with its withering power upon the lives of many of those who have most consistently believed it. "Give us of your oil," they said, "for our lamps are gone out." So these men, like the foolish virgins, expect that God will impute other men's virtues to them, and that thus they will be included in their fellowship with Him. They will go in on the borrowed light of another.

Notice that these Foolish Virgins were not able to obtain what they needed, in the moment of time which they had when they learned that the Bridegroom was at hand. While they went to buy, the Bridegroom came, and the door was closed. This was the second disappointment of the Foolish Virgins. Then we notice another mistake of theirs; they expected that somehow the Bridegroom could be induced to share with them the feast for which they were unprepared; as if God could possibly give to an unprepared soul the feast of fellowship with Him. Terrible was the experience of these Virgins when they found that the feast was, indeed, a great real-

ity, but that they were excluded from it because they had failed to qualify themselves for its enjoyment. What if such experience awaits many who have little or no faith in the Kingdom of God! What if an hour should come in which they would know that it is a glorious reality! The hour is coming in which all men will know what His attitude toward them is. They then will discover whether they are prepared for fellowship with Him, or whether they must of necessity realize their exclusion from Him.

The great majority of men are asleep to the fact of the spiritual life. They are not conscious of the presence of God and therefore are without any fellowship with Him. It will be a frightful experience for such persons to awake to the reality of the spiritual life and find that they have wasted the time that they should have been employing in preparing themselves for its enjoyment; for, as Jesus Christ so remarkably illustrates in this parable, readiness for a larger fellowship can be had only through the preparation of a growing fellowship. One who neglects the earlier

stages of such development will find himself of necessity undeveloped for the larger fellowship. If Heaven is a place of large fellowship with God, there is no reason to suppose that a man can experience it except as he has prepared himself for it, by gradually developing his experience of fellowship up to the place where he is qualified to enter into it.

Very remarkable is the statement by the Bridegroom of his reason for excluding the Foolish Virgins; "I know you not." As if he had said, "Without acquaintance with me you seek a large fellowship with me, a perfect union with me; without having developed a fellowship with me through its earlier stages you seek abruptly to enter into this fullest experience." Such a result is absolutely impossible. As well might a youth attempt to matriculate in a university when he had neglected all preparatory courses. As well might one seek to enter into the highest fellowship of art when he had not as yet learned its first principles. As well might one attempt to acquire a language, the a-b-c of which he had refused to learn. And yet such men represent multi-

tudes in the Church of Christ today, who imagine that they are to enter into the perfect fellowship with God at the midnight hour of death, when they have not made the slightest attempt, in this present life, to prepare themselves for that fellowship. It will be a frightful experience for such men when they realize their unpreparedness. It will be terrible to discover that the feast of the perfected Kingdom of God is a reality, but that they are unprepared to enjoy it. I warn every reader of the peril of sleeping away the time given by God to develop the Kingdom of God in his soul. Oh, you sleeping Virgins, arise and seek oil for your lamps while it may be found! Seek acquaintance with God and maintain a growing fellowship with Him, so that you may be prepared for the future of perfect fellowship with Him. Refuse to believe those who tell you that fellowship with God is not a growth; that it is a thing that can be received hereafter as a direct gift. Listen to the voice of Jesus Christ as he puts you on your guard against this deadly peril to the soul. Beware how you sleep away the time given you to

develop a fellowship with God that will enable you to enjoy a perfect union with Him hereafter.

# XII

# TWO RICH MEN: THEIR HEAVEN AND HELL

Luke 16 : 1–31, Mat. 25 : 42–45

*See appendix, pages 331, 332*

# CHAPTER XII

## TWO RICH MEN: THEIR HEAVEN AND HELL

### THE PARABLES OF THE UNJUST STEWARD, AND DIVES AND LAZARUS

THE parable of the Unjust Steward is closely related to the parable of Dives and Lazarus. Both are parables of the Kingdom of God, although they are not so called by our Lord. The parable of the Unjust Steward illustrates the fact that men who are to enter into fellowship with God after death must begin that fellowship in this life. The steward had received notice that his stewardship was soon to terminate. Like him, we all understand that the life we are now living is soon to end. He was wise in preparing himself for the life that he desired to enter into after his stewardship was over. "What shall I do," he asked, "when I am no longer steward?" "Thou fool," is the word of Christ for the man

who does not consider that there is a life beyond the grave, the nature of which he is to determine by the life he lives here. "If," the steward says, "I am to escape a friendless life after my stewardship ends, I must make friends now, who shall receive me then. If I am to enter into friendships there, they must begin here."

Death is a harvest when we shall reap what we have sown and nothing more. I do not say that we shall have no opportunity for sowing after this life is over that shall bring a harvest later, but we shall not find prepared for us after death what we have not developed in this life. Jesus is always illustrating and emphasizing this fact, which none of his disciples, in the days of his flesh, seemed to understand and to which most of his disciples now are utterly blind. At another time he tells the story of the foolish rich man who laid up much goods for his pleasure in this life, while he laid up nothing for his pleasure after death. He represents men who toil thirty, forty, fifty years to accumulate the means to enjoy the things of this world for a brief season, but

make no preparation for the eternal fellowship of the everlasting ages.

The steward, in this parable, was wise in sowing what he wanted to reap. He had no idea that he could expect to enter into a life for which he had not prepared himself. So Jesus wishes us to understand that if heaven is to be a place of friendship it can only be because we create such friendship in this life and, so to speak, lay it up in heaven before we go there. The steward was wise in the method he used to secure the future he desired. He understood that only in one way could he possibly secure that future. "I cannot dig," he said, by which he meant, "I cannot possibly work my way into what I desire." "And to beg I am ashamed," that is to say, "I do not desire, after my life of stewardship is over, to be dependent upon charity, to have a future in which I shall be a pauper, a recipient and not a giver, in which I shall reap what I have not sown, in which I shall have whatever pleasure there may be in a selfish life. Even if, in that life beyond, I should be able to beg what I desire, my life would be one of shame. If I

should be permitted to receive after having failed to give, whatever I might receive would bring no joy, no glory, but shame."

These words of Christ have a deeper meaning than we have ever imagined. They should be very earnestly considered by all who are expecting to find in heaven a life in which they will be ministered to, notwithstanding the fact that they have developed no spirit of ministering. Such a life could never prove a joy. It could no more prove a joy there than it can prove a joy here. The writer is of opinion that a great majority of those who are anticipating a satisfactory life in heaven are expecting to reap it without sowing it, are hoping to receive it as a gift, independent of any capacity they may have developed for it. They are to be eternal paupers, spiritual parasites, always being ministered to, notwithstanding their failure to minister. The steward of this parable was infinitely wise in realizing that even if he could live the life of a parasite, his life would be one of shame and pain instead of honor and joy. He was wiser than the foolish virgins who

thought they could beg their way into the feast of fellowship, for which they had refused to put themselves to the cost of preparing. He understood that a life in which he was served without serving could never be a life of fellowship. "To beg I am ashamed."

We must have Christ's thought in mind if we would understand His illustrations. Jesus intended that the master of this parable should represent God in his two attitudes toward men, both of which are decided by their attitudes toward one another. When the steward acted from a selfish motive in his dealings with his master's servants his master condemned him as a fool, for selfishness is folly, since it always loses infinitely more than it gains. Selfishness is unprofitable for all concerned, as illustrated in this case where the steward's selfishness proved unprofitable to his master, unprofitable to himself and unprofitable to all those whom he served. Oh, that the world could be made to see the folly and unprofitableness of selfishness, as Jesus saw it when he uttered this parable, and as he declared it when he said, "What shall it profit a man if

he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Oh, that men could be made to see that selfishness is never profitable in the long run, that any possible gain that it may bring must be offset sooner or later by a much greater loss! If there is gain of money at the expense of loss of love, where is the profit? If there is gain of pleasure for a day at the cost of pain for years, where is the gain? If one wins the friendships of selfishness at the cost of the loss of friendship with God and all those who embody his spirit, is that profitable? The world will never be perfected until it comes to see the folly of every form and degree of selfishness.

"And the same was accused unto him that he was wasting his goods." That man is wasting his master's goods who is not using them with the motive of love for all whom he serves. He is wasting all that he is using selfishly, for the service that men render one another is intended by God to bind them one to another and to Him in true fellowship. The steward of the parable wasted his master's goods when he used them in such fashion as to misrepresent the love and right-

eousness of his master, and to embitter those whom he served against his master and himself. He was an unprofitable servant. There was no profit in what he did with his master's goods, either for his master, for himself or for his servants, and he represents all stewards of God, all employers who are not so conducting their business as to make friends of their employees. "And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when it shall fail they may receive you into eternal tabernacles." The word "friend" which Jesus uses literally means "loved ones." Every man who endeavors to serve his brother wastes God's goods and gifts in so doing unless he creates in their hearts love for himself and his Master. It is his duty to so conduct his business that men, seeing his works of righteousness and love, shall glorify his Father in heaven. What we want every reader to understand is that in God's sight every man who is not doing this is condemned by Him for wasting his goods. It matters not how much money he makes, or how large the wages that he pays, if he is not

conducting his business on the motive of love for those with whom he deals, he is not fulfilling the purpose of God in giving him gifts and the means for that business relationship. The steward was thus wasting his master's goods when his master condemned him and declared his purpose to discharge him. But there came a change in the steward's attitude toward the servants that made it possible for the master's attitude toward him to correspondingly change. The steward suddenly changed his attitude toward the servants from one of oppression to one of kindness. He began to act for their interests. He reduced their burdens, some more, some less. There was a real change in his motive. He saw at last the unprofitableness of the use he had made of his master's goods as he realized that he had incurred his master's displeasure and was about to suffer the loss of the position in his service on which he depended for a living. In a word, this steward found out that he could not have fellowship with his master while he so treated his master's servants as to make it impossible for them to have fellowship with him. Oh,

that somehow this great truth could dawn upon the Christian world, upon all stewards of God who are blind to the fact that fellowship with Him can be had only as one seeks the fellowship of love with men. The steward saw that his selfishness had proved a terrible mistake, that he had impoverished himself by impoverishing those whom it was his duty to serve. When he realized that his interests and the interests of his master and of the servants were one, that he must advance the interests of others to advance his own, that he must do unto others as he would be done by, then he changed his whole attitude toward others, and began to serve them as he desired to be served by them. When this change occurred in him, his master's attitude of condemnation changed to an attitude of commendation. "His Lord commended him for he had done wisely," for love is wisdom, as selfishness is folly. Love is profitable, as selfishness is unprofitable. God commends the man who is so using his gifts and graces as to endear himself to men, for by so doing he endears himself to God.

But was not the steward's motive selfish in

serving men that he might win service from them? Did he not sacrifice his master's interests in what he did for his master's servants? No. His master would not have commended him for so doing if he had not felt that what he did was wise for all concerned. He commended his steward because for the first time the steward was using his master's goods as his master had always desired him to use them. It is not a selfish motive for a man to have his own interests at heart, as well as the interests of others. He is not called to sacrifice either his own interests or the interests of others, since they are always identical. No man is ever called to sacrifice his own welfare to promote the welfare of others; for anything that one may lose in the service of love, even though he lose life itself, is sure to bring something better in its place. The gain of promoting the welfare of others is always greater than any losses sustained by so doing. The children of this world are quicker to see this than are the children of light: *i. e.*, men are quicker to see this law as it relates to material things than they are to see it as it relates to spiritual

things. The wise business man knows that he must render the public a valuable service if he expects from the public a valuable reward. He does not expect anything for nothing. He sees this much more clearly than he sees that he must increase his spiritual possessions in the same way. A man who knows how to serve others so as to make money may be blind to the similar law of service by which he shall enrich his soul. The law is the same in both cases, but, alas! most men do not see its better feature. They know what to sow in order to reap material things, but are blind to what they must sow if they would reap spiritual things, notwithstanding the fact that in the spiritual world, as in the natural world, what a man sows that shall he reap,—love for love, hate for hate. Fellowship with God cannot be had except as one acts on the motive of love in all dealings with men. The conditions of fellowship with God are the same for all men, both in time and eternity, both on earth and in heaven. When the steward's attitude toward his brothers changed, his master's attitude toward him changed. So long as the steward

sacrificed the interests of his brothers, his master condemned him, but as soon as the steward began to serve his brothers, his master commended him. In further emphasizing the truth of this parable, Jesus says, "If therefore ye have not been faithful in unrighteous Mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" That is, it is certain that a man who is selfish in the use of material things would be equally so in the use of spiritual riches.

No man can have two motives, one in the use of material things, the other in the use of spiritual things. The covetous man will also be a Pharisee. His motive in business and religion will be the same. If he transacts his business solely for selfish gain he will pray in the same spirit, to be seen of men. No, a man who is selfish in the use of material things could not be depended upon for unselfish use of spiritual things. He that is faithless in that which is least is also faithless in that which is greatest.

Jesus adds one more thought. If you have "not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?"

What does this mean? This; that if we are selfish in this world we would be much more so in the spiritual world. The fact that we are selfish here proves that we would be selfish there, for there are many things here that do not obtain there to restrain and rebuke our selfishness. Here we are under the restraints of using what we have as stewards of God with the understanding that we are to give account to Him for our use of it. There every man is free to use all he has as his own, all restraints having been removed. If, therefore, Jesus says, a man will not do the will of God here, what reason is there to suppose that he would do it there? If here one will not obey God's will of righteous love under the restraints of accountability to God, there is certainly no reason to suppose that one would obey that law in a world where all such responsibility is removed. If, therefore, Jesus says, you are not faithful in that which is another man's, who will give you that which is your own? If you will not use your present possessions faithfully under all the restraints of stewardship, there is no reason to suppose

that you would use your future inheritance faithfully if such restraints were wholly removed.

Very strikingly Jesus follows this parable with the parable of Dives and Lazarus. The rich man, in this parable, dies without having laid up any fellowship in heaven. He goes to the life beyond the grave not having done what the wise steward did.

Mark well the contrast between these two men. One requires his steward to have the interests of all his employees at heart; he commended him when he reduced the rents of his tenants, some twenty per cent. and some fifty per cent. In other words, this rich man acts on the motive of love toward all with whom he is related, and so creates for himself and his servants a heaven of friendship.

But Dives' spirit is essentially selfish. He cares only for himself and for those closely related to him. He wears the most costly clothing and fares sumptuously every day, but he feels no sense of obligation for the welfare of the beggar starving at his gate. Dives would not do anything for a man who was not

in a position to make return for any service he might render him, and so he permits Lazarus to starve at his gate, not knowing that all that he was permitting Lazarus to suffer—and more—he would have to suffer later himself.

Multitudes, I fear, of those who call themselves Christians are represented by Dives. Like him, they have love only for those closely related to them. They want their brothers and others of their immediate circle of relatives and friends to be saved from such wretchedness as they are perfectly willing that others endure. Their love for men is not God's love for them. They are *seemingly* unselfish in their attitude toward their close relatives, while they are utterly selfish in their attitude toward others. That was the exact case with Dives who asked that a miracle of God be wrought to save his five brothers from suffering but who would not give so much as the crumbs that fell from his table to the man at his gate starving from hunger, to whom he had no special relationship. Dives was seemingly a sheep to his relatives but a wolf to others. He was seemingly kind to his family

and friends but cruel toward those for whose welfare he felt that he had no responsibility. Oh, the whole world is cursed with this Dives type of love with its corresponding type of unrighteousness. It is seen where one's love is no broader than to include his near relatives or his own sect or his own church or his own nation. I wonder if this selfish spirit is not evident in all the nations involved in this war. Which of them has the interests of the others at heart? "My five brothers"—for their interests only I am concerned. If our love is to be God's love it must embrace all men, everywhere. It must include the man who has no other claim upon us than that he is a son of God.

"What shall I do that I may have eternal life?" a lawyer asked Jesus. Eternal life is the life of the eternal, universal love—that only is the love of God. And Jesus answered and said:

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readst thou?

27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and

with all thy strength and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him,* and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him,* and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him,*

34 And went to *him,* and bound up his wounds, pouring oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

To have Christ's experience of God, one must do what the Samaritan did. What was

that? He acted on exactly the same motive in dealing with a man of a nation that hated his nation, as he would have acted on if he had been called a brother. He could not have done more than he did for the wounded Jew if the Jew had been his own son. Mark this fact well that what the Samaritan did for the wounded man he did without any hope of other reward than might come to him in the joy of doing it. He practiced the Golden Rule, doing unto another as he would have had the other do by him. Mark well the contrast between the Samaritan and Dives. How clear and sharp it is. As I write, it makes me wonder to which of the two classes they represent I belong. What is my attitude toward the man on the Jericho road, toward the beggar lying at my gate? Is it that of the Samaritan or that of Dives? My dear reader, ask yourself this question just now. Pause in your reading and prayerfully consider it. Is your loving interest in men limited to those of your own class, or nationality, or does it go out to the whole world of suffering, sinning, perishing humanity?

Let us notice that Dives' selfish love for his brothers does not enable him to save them from the hell of his selfish spirit. Here, too, is a great truth to which our attention may not have been called: in sacrificing the interests of the poor and suffering to secure his own interests and the interests of his closely related brothers, Dives made the fearful mistake that men of his class are always making—a mistake that he discovered later when he found out that in sacrificing the interests of the poor and suffering at his gates he had sacrificed his own interests and the interests of his five brothers also. That man who limits his service to his own near relatives will not be able to serve them as well as he would if he had extended his service to those with whom he is not so closely related, for he gives his relatives an example of selfishness which must prove their ruin except some miracle of God be wrought to protect them from it.

Unspeakably wretched was the experience of Dives when he found that his selfish spirit had proved a curse both to himself and to his brothers, and that the only man who had es-

caped its withering effect was the man who suffered innocently because of it. What a warning he is to our rich men who are underpaying those who labor for them, and who are neglecting the crying appeals of suffering humanity in order to amass large fortunes for themselves and their close relatives. Money thus inherited becomes to those who inherit it one of the deadliest perils. They are as likely to enter the Kingdom of Heaven as the camel is to pass through the eye of a needle. Money wrongly taken from the poor always imperils those who take it. The selfish rich man hurts most those of his own family who follow his selfish example. That rich man who would most bless his relatives should minister to the needs of those who are not closely related to him, but who are suffering because of their poverty.

The time came when Dives reaped only what he had sown,—when he found himself in the exact condition of the man whom he had permitted to die hungry at his gate. At that earlier time Lazarus was without a friend, and now Dives is in the same state. Alone at

the gate the beggar was, and alone in a hell of loneliness the rich man is. Suffering from hunger and craving a crumb of bread the beggar lay, now Dives is tormented with thirst for which he asks in vain a drop of water. Those who had been in a position to help Lazarus *did* not do so; now those who are in a position to help Dives *cannot* help him. Dives *would* not help Lazarus, and now Lazarus *cannot* help Dives. Each needs the other, but neither can go to the other because of the gulf which separates them.

That gulf was the selfish spirit of the rich man. It had kept him from serving Lazarus and now it makes it impossible for Lazarus to serve him. It had blinded Dives to his duty to feed his dying brother, and now it prevents Lazarus from sharing with Dives the comforts and joys of his unselfish spirit. Love only gives spiritual and moral vision. Without love in his heart for the beggar at his gate Dives did not see his duty or opportunity to give him even that temporal relief which his sufferings required. And now without that love Dives is blind to the fact that Lazarus

cannot render him the service he desires. So long as this selfish spirit remained unchanged in Dives, the gulf between him and Lazarus remained fixed. Only by filling the rich man's heart with love can that gulf be removed.

And now I want to show you how Dives' selfishness at last involved him in absolute friendlessness. The most awful picture in the Bible is not that of the beggar dying at the rich man's gate, for that picture of unspeakable loneliness is relieved by the presence in it of the dogs that licked the sores of the dying man—but the picture of the rich man in the solitariness of his torture in the hell of the selfishness which he had made for himself.

First Dives is separated from Abraham, who here represents God. He is as far from God as he is from the poorest man with whom God is in fellowship. The distance between Dives and Lazarus, who is in the bosom of Abraham, is the exact distance between Dives and God, for the degree to which the selfish spirit separates us from fellowship with the most unselfish men is the degree in which that spirit separates us from the fellowship of God.

We cannot be in fellowship with God while we have a spirit that separates us from fellowship with His most obscure and humble children.

And then the rich man *does not desire the presence with him of his five brothers, since he feels that their presence would only add to his torture.* They were evidently all men of his selfish spirit. Proof of this is found in the fact that Dives begged that a miracle be wrought to warn them that they were on their way to share his experience of torture. "If they should come here," he said, "they will simply add to my misery. Doubtless they would blame me for leading them into such a hell of torture." It was not so much care for his five brothers as care for himself that led Dives to ask that they be kept away from him.

How fearful is the misery of the selfish man who is closely related to those who are equally selfish when he can no longer serve them. How thoroughly alone he is as far as any service or sympathy from them is concerned. Their presence simply increases his torment.

Let the selfish rich man lose his money and become dependent upon those who have shared his ill-gotten gains; let him cease to be of any further service to them, and their selfish spirit toward him will make him desire to escape from their company. Dives did not want his selfish brothers with him in the hour of his poverty and distress! He would rather be alone than have their company. From those whom he has selfishly served he expects nothing, and with him whom he has selfishly refused to serve he is unable to share anything.

After writing the above, a specially gifted friend called my attention to the idea of Canon Wilberforce, that it was not the spirit of God in Abraham that led him to deny the request of Dives to send Lazarus to relieve him of his torture. "Was it Christ-like that Abraham should refuse such a request without even consulting Lazarus, who might have been willing to go on the mission of mercy? Would it have been Christ-like for Lazarus to do by Dives as Dives had done by him? Was not Abraham's refusal to ease the pain of Dives a direct contradiction of the law of love? Was

not his refusal to help Dives as selfish as Dives' refusal to aid Lazarus had been?"

The case, as thus put, has an ugly look for Abraham. And not only so, but also for Jesus, since Jesus justified Abraham's attitude of refusal to send Lazarus to help Dives. If there is fault here, therefore, we shall have to charge it to the Son of God. But a close interpretation of the words of Dives to Abraham will relieve us of the feeling that his attitude to Dives was not one of holy love.

It is never the will of God that men be freed from the penalty of their sins so long as they are unrepentant of them, and there was no repentance in Dives of his sin against Lazarus. When Abraham reminds him of it, he does not indicate any change of mind toward it. He wants Lazarus to share his torture at the expense of the loss of his comfort in the bosom of Abraham. Dives reminds me of a man who asks me to send his wife back to live with him after he has treated her as badly as Dives treated Lazarus. As this man's selfish spirit is wholly unchanged, I refuse to advise his wife that she yield to his demand to return to

her life of torture with him. Had he given signs of true repentance I should have been willing that she suffer with and for him, but for her to make him comfortable in the hell he had made for himself and which he wanted her to share, I could not possibly consent to that.

You notice the very striking fact that Dives does not ask Lazarus to serve him. He will not humble himself to do that. He will not even admit that he is under any obligation to the man whose services he needs. He does not ask Abraham to ask Lazarus to come but to send him.

"Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip his finger into water and cool my parched tongue." His words indicate the unchanged character of his selfish spirit. Death has made no difference in him. He asks now to be ministered to, as he had been ministered to before he died. He offers no service, but asks to be served.

And Abraham replies, "Son, the thing that you ask is impossible: the gulf between you and Lazarus renders it so. You cannot reap from him what you did not sow in him when

you had the greatest possible opportunity to do so. You ask me to command him to serve you, notwithstanding the fact of your absolute refusal to serve him while you had opportunity. Son, remember some things that you seem to have forgotten, some things that prevent the granting of your request. Remember that in your lifetime you were in a position and condition to relieve distress that was such as to excite the pity of the dumb dogs. Now *with that same selfish spirit unchanged,* you ask to reap the joys of the unselfish life. With the same gulf which you have created still existing between you and your brother, you ask that he may relieve you of the suffering which is inseparably connected with your selfish spirit. The thing is impossible. I cannot send Lazarus to ease your pain. It is not in his power to give you the joys of the unselfish spirit while you are still the embodiment of the selfish spirit. He cannot go to you with even so much of fellowship as is represented by a drop of water, for that fellowship is inseparably connected with a spirit of service which you do not possess." The joys of the

unselfish life, can they in any degree be ministered to a man who has the selfish spirit? Can a man enjoy that for which he is not fitted, for which he has no capacity, for which he has developed no fellowship? Can a man who desires only to be ministered unto know anything of the joys of one whose greatest delight is in imparting joy to others?

Jesus has given us in this parable the most striking illustration of the impossibility of a selfish man's sharing the joys of an unselfish life. Here is one of the eternal "cannots" of Jesus Christ, which all men should understand, but of which most men are unconscious. It is a question now whether my readers will see it, even while it is before their eyes, and understand it, even though it is illustrated, again and again, in this book. Let me repeat it. One cannot sow pain and reap joy. One cannot appreciate the gifts to him of unselfish love so long as his heart is filled with the spirit of selfishness. This is what Jesus means when he says, "Cast not your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn on you and rend you."

Selfishness in man contradicts the very nature of God and makes fellowship with Him impossible. All of a man's belief in religious dogma and practice of religious forms will not give him the least crumb of fellowship with God, so long as he remains in bondage to the selfish spirit. He who would permit another man to lie in his friendlessness and sickness and poverty unministered to, at his gate, could not possibly have any fellowship with God by means of anything he might do in mere observance of forms or rites of religion.

It is very striking that the gulf between Dives and Lazarus before death was exactly the same after death. Death did not fill it up, or bridge it over. These men were as far apart in the life beyond the grave as they were in the life this side the vale, and the gulf that separated them there was the same as that which divided them here. Dives represents all those who expect a life after death in which they shall be ministered to without ministering, a life in which they shall be served without serving, a life whose joy shall be a joy of selfishness. That seems to be the conception of

heaven that is held by many who name the name of Christ and who are familiar with his continual rebuke of such a conception.

A frightful awakening is in store for all who hold Dives' idea of the life beyond the grave. Their conception of heaven is Christ's conception of hell. I repeat that this man's conception of heaven was after all nothing but a true conception of hell.

The only joy there is in this life is the joy of service through love. To be served, even by those whom we love most, without serving, is not pleasure, but pain. To be without the consciousness that we are needed by others is misery. Abraham is righteously represented in this parable as declaring to Dives the solemn truth that not the least degree of the fellowship of holy love can be brought to bear upon a man in whose heart none of that love dwells. If Lazarus had attempted to give Dives what he asked, he would have found it impossible to do so. No gift of love can be recognized nor received as such by one in whose heart love for the giver does not dwell.

The parable closes without giving us any

light as to the eternal love of Dives. Jesus solemnly warns us that the love that prepares a soul for fellowship with God is a love that goes far beyond one's near relatives; that it is a love that includes the least of God's children, that does not pass by the man "down and out," at the gate. No man can have Christ's fellowship with God except as he has Christ's love for men.

# XIII

# THE TABLE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Mat. 26 : 17–29, Luke 22 : 29, 30, John 6 : 51–57, John 6 : 60–63

*See appendix, pages 332, 333*

## CHAPTER XIII

## THE TABLE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The Table in the Kingdom represents the fellowship of those each of whom is a member of the Kingdom of God. It is a communion that is limited to those who share Christ's experience of God. During his lifetime, Jesus never ate and drank with his disciples in the Kingdom. He could not have spiritual fellowship with men not one of whom had yet entered into fellowship with the Heavenly Father. They ate and drank with Jesus, but not in the Kingdom of God. "I will not eat and drink with you again," the Master said, "until I eat and drink anew with you in my Father's kingdom." That word, "anew," means in a new sense, or a new experience. Jesus anticipated that the next time he ate and drank with his disciples, it would be in the spiritual fellowship with him in his experience of God.

This fellowship Jesus symbolized by bread and wine, representing his body and his blood. "Except," he said, "ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, ye have no life in you." What does this mean? Not that one must eat the very flesh and drink the very blood of Christ in order to have fellowship with God. It is incredible that men should have so misunderstood Jesus as to teach such an idea, especially as he distinctly declared that it would profit no one to eat his flesh and drink his blood, literally.

What did he mean by the symbols he used? Let Jesus tell us. The Church would never have made the mistakes that it has in interpreting the words of Jesus if it had permitted him to be his own interpreter. "The words that I speak unto you," Jesus said, "they are spirit and they are life," by which he means that we are to take his words concerning his flesh and blood in a spiritual sense. "Only as I give myself to you and as you receive me into your hearts is it possible that we should have that fellowship which only is life." For fellowship is life. How few there are that

thus give themselves to others! How much of themselves Christians reserve from those with whom they are closely associated! "Only those who love men as they realize they are loved of God give themselves wholly to men, as they realize God has given Himself to them." Christ's flesh and blood represent all of himself. No other man has given himself to everybody as freely and as fully as Christ did. He gave the bread and the wine, representing himself, not only to his friends but to his enemies; to one who was ready to betray him and to another who had bargained to sell him.

So men who bear his name should give themselves to one another—their best, when they are in fellowship with God and enriched through experience of his holy love. Oh, what life would mean if Christians were to do this! What a fellowship that would be in which all men, enriched by growing union with God, should give themselves freely, in costly expressions of love one to another. That would be the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, which is life eternal. This is what Jesus meant by the

ordinance of his holy Supper. This is what he had in mind when he said, "Do this in remembrance of me." Do what? "Give yourselves to one another, as I have given myself to you, love as I have loved, serve as I have served."

Where two or three thus give themselves to one another in holy love, there the fellowship of Christ and God is experienced. We are to give ourselves to one another as freely as God gives Himself to us.

So the Master teaches. His largest example of love he calls upon us to follow. After he had washed the feet of his disciples he said, "I have done this as an example for you." He expects us to measure up to his love for man and for God. He regarded it as his duty to love men as he realized God had loved him. How far short of this high ideal has the church fallen! The love-language of the New Testament has been largely lost from the church. Even we preachers rarely think of using it in our intercourse with one another. Not until we love men as Christ loved men shall we have Christ's experience of God.

The Lord's Supper, as it is administered in the Protestant and Catholic churches, is a pitiful shadow, at best, of the ordinance as Christ instituted it. That ordinance is never kept in spirit and truth except by those who are giving themselves in loving service to men. People who hunger for pure love like Christ's, should find it in his Church, as such persons found it in Christ. Oh, how he gave himself to the poorest and most sinful of men and women! He was angry when his disciples sought to prevent mothers from bringing their little children to him in order that he might bless them. Jesus was angry with anyone who sought to prevent him from giving himself fully to all those who desired his redeeming love. He found his keenest pleasure in sharing, with all who would receive it, the fulness of the love that he himself had received from his Heavenly Father. We may not hope to eat and drink with him at his table in his Father's Kingdom until we share with him his Father's love. We may have from God all that Jesus had from Him. Of His fulness we may all receive, grace for grace. No good

thing will God withhold from us so long as we are willing to share it with all others. When we give ourselves as fully to men as Christ gave himself to men, we shall know Christ's experience of God as he knew it. That will be to eat and drink with him at his table in his Father's Kingdom.

One word more. One may eat of spiritual food apart from any symbolism of it. Jesus used the symbols only to represent the fellowship to men who had as yet no experience of it. One who has the spiritual experience has no need of spiritual symbols. One would hardly need a picture of Venice while walking the streets of St. Mark's Square, or while sailing a gondola on the Grand Canal. I remember what a mockery the best picture of the Jung Frau was to me when I was at Interlaken feasting my eyes upon its glories. Precisely so does the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, as it is administered in the church, impress me when I am enjoying an experience of the Lord Himself. I doubt very much whether Jesus intended that his disciples should continue the use of the symbol after they had entered into

its experience. Certain it is that many of the choicest souls do not find it easiest to experience the Lord's presence in connection with the Lord's Supper. They find that presence in the closet, with the door closed, or in that giving of themselves to others which Jesus meant to symbolize when he gave the bread and wine to his disciples.

When we do what Jesus did, when we put ourselves into services of love for friend, and foe also, we "do show forth" the love of God for men, which is the one condition of fellowship with Him. Then, and only then, we eat with Christ at his table in the Kingdom of his Father.

# XIV

# HOW THE WORLD IS TO BE ENLIGHTENED AND SAVED

Rev. 21 : 9–14, Rev. 21 : 18, Rev. 21 : 21–27, Rev. 22 : 1–5, Rev. 22 : 17, Heb. 12 : 22, 23, Rev. 3 : 12, Rev. 11 : 15

*See appendix, pages 333, 334*

## CHAPTER XIV

## HOW THE WORLD IS TO BE ENLIGHTENED AND SAVED

The Bible reaches its climax of spiritual teaching in its closing vision of the Kingdom of God as described in the form of a city, the New Jerusalem descending out of Heaven. This vision came to one of the most spiritual of the Apostles of Christ in an hour when his whole soul was filled with Christ's experience of God. Speaking of his spiritual exaltation the writer says, "I was called away in the spirit to a *great high mountain.*" It was the highest and greatest spiritual experience of the life of the most spiritual of all the disciples of the Son of God. This great spiritual vision came out of his high spiritual experience. What he saw he beheld through the eyes of his experience of the presence of God. The fact is that this spiritual vision is so high and great that it has seemed to us who are

of little spiritual vision to be of little spiritual value, because spiritual things are spiritually discerned. Oh, if we could but see it from the great high spiritual mountain from which it was seen of the Apostle!

Remember that the New Jerusalem is the Kingdom of Heaven which is also the Kingdom of God on earth. To make us sure of this the writer tells us that the throne of God and of the Lamb is in the city. I have told you that this kingdom is the relationship of those whose God is their King. Here it is called the bride of Christ—that is, everyone who is to be united with Jesus, as a bride is joined to her husband, must be prepared for that union by sharing with Jesus his experience of God. Only in the New Jerusalem does one live with the Son of God. Only, I say, as one has Christ's spiritual personal union with the Father is it possible that one should be wedded to Jesus. "No man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Spirit." Is this not at once apparent? No one is prepared as a bride for Christ who does not share Christ's experience of God. Without that, one may follow Jesus

in some measure as a servant, but to be wedded to him, to live with him in the most spiritual of all relationships, one must dwell with him in the Kingdom of God, which is here symbolized by the New Jerusalem. This is the teaching of Jesus, and is true in the very nature of the case. You, my reader, know perfectly well that you are not wedded to Jesus if you do not share his spiritual experience. We cannot eat and drink with him except in the kingdom of his Father.

See, now, how one must dwell in the New Jerusalem in order to dwell with Christ in God. The *walls* of the city exclude everything that is unholy, everything that is profane, everything that is not spiritual in its nature. The walls of the city protect its inhabitants from all that is defiling. "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that maketh abomination or worketh a lie." In union with God man is protected from the evils of the world as he could not otherwise be protected. A mighty fortress of God is the city whose walls tower as high as He is. Those who are wedded to Christ in his experience of God

have Christ's protection from the evils of the world that prey upon those who are outside that experience.

Only through the *gate* guarded by the angels of God is it possible that one should enter the city. That gate is such surrender of one's soul to God as Christ practiced. Until we are prepared to unite with Christ in his surrender of himself to the will of God, we cannot join him in his rich fellowship with God. Christ's consecration of himself to do the will of his Heavenly Father is the door of single pearl into the New Jerusalem.

Then we must be prepared to walk with Christ the *streets* of the New Jerusalem—which are all transparent gold. We must walk in the light as he is in the light if we are to have fellowship with him and with one another. Walking the streets of the City of God means walking in truth and righteousness and love. Only so can we walk with God, and only as we walk with Him can we hope to be wedded to Christ. If we are not prepared to put into daily practice, in all the relationships of life, the principles of God, which are the

principles of love and truth, we are not prepared to be wedded to the Son of God—we are not adorned as a bride for him. I wish to impress the fact that only those who walk the golden streets of the City of God, only those who practice obedience to the principles of God, have fellowship with Christ.

And then, too, we must be prepared to walk in the *light* of this city which is the light of the Kingdom of God, if we are to be wedded with Christ in God. Those who dwell in the New Jerusalem are said to have no need of the light of lamp, or even of the sun, because the Lord God gives them light. They have the light of God in their own souls, that light which lighteth every man that is born into the world, so that they are not dependent upon even the brightest symbols of that light for guidance. They do not require the light of another, since they have light greater than that of all others. We cannot be wedded to Christ until we have his direct experience of the spirit of God which is the light of the spiritual world.

We must also be prepared to *worship* God in Christ, as we can never do until we worship

God in spirit and in truth. John says, "I saw no temple in the New Jerusalem." Worship, there, is not a matter of place or of creed but of personal fellowship with God and with Christ and with those who dwell in God and God in them. The Lamb is the temple of the New Jerusalem. The spirit of God in direct union with a man enables him to worship God in spirit and in truth. That is the worship that weds one to Christ in his experience of God. No one is prepared for fellowship with Christ—to worship God in Christ—who does not worship God in his spiritual presence. No temple worship can be substituted for that spiritual worship of God in which one realizes his union with Jesus Christ.

The *fruits* of union with God are found in the New Jerusalem. We there join with Christ in his experience of these fruits. We eat and drink with Jesus in his Father's kingdom. The Tree of Life, (that word always means fellowship), bears all manner of fruit, in all seasons of the year. The soul that shares Christ's spiritual experience of God finds every season of his life fruitful; in the win-

ter of adversity as well as in the summer of prosperity; in hours of joy as well as in hours of sorrow; in times of success and in times of failure; when loved and when hated; when sick and when well; in youth and in old age; in life and in death, the soul that dwells with God and is wedded to Christ finds all things working together for his good, finds all the experience of his life fruitful in developing the life of the spirit of God in his soul. He is never called to pass through a fruitless experience. Blessed tree of the knowledge of God with all manner of fruits in all seasons of the year!

There is a *river* of life also in the City of God. One who is wedded to Christ in his experience of God has complete satisfaction for all his spiritual thirst. God is in him like a well of water springing up unto eternal life. He does not thirst for love which is not within his reach, since the spirit of God in his heart sheds abroad in full abundance the love of God for which he thirsts. This union is most beautiful; all manner of precious stones are made to symbolize its beauty. Beautiful deeds,

beautiful motives, beautiful ideals belong to the beautiful life of every son of God.

When one is wedded to Christ in God two results follow: First, everything connected with his life is transformed by his union with God. The leaves of the Tree of Life are for the healing of the nations. The words and deeds, the example and influence of that man in whom God spiritually dwells, have healing power for sorrowing and sinning souls. I repeat that everything connected with a man who dwells in God possesses something of the power of God. His every word is in a measure the word of God. In touching one who is in touch with God we come in touch with God. We feel His purity, His love, His power in the deeds and words of those who company with Him. Second, the world's attitude toward the New Jerusalem will be the world's attitude toward the church when the church becomes like that city. When the church is wedded to Christ in his experience of God the world will bring its honor to the church; "Kings of the earth do bring their treasures to the city." "The nations of the earth shall walk

in the light of it." Oh, if the church were the bride of Christ how the world would honor it! If she were joined with Christ in God how surely the world would walk in her light! Why does not the world honor the church? Why do not her leaves heal the frightful wounds of the world? Why does the world treat the church with contempt, as Christ said it would if the church should ever lose its saving power? I tell you because the church is not spiritually wedded to Christ. Therefore the kings of the earth are not bringing their treasures of honor to her and are not walking in the light of her teaching and of her love.

Come up on the top of the high spiritual mountain where the bride of Christ can be seen; where we can behold what we must be like if we are to become the salt and light of this perishing world. Come and see what we shall have to do in order to prepare ourselves, as a bride for Jesus Christ, in his work of saving the world; what we must become before the world will honor us and we be able to heal its wounds. Come and behold what we

must become before the nations of the world will walk in our light even as we are walking in the light of God. Look out upon the world in its ghastly state of war and crime and sin and understand that its condition is due to the failure of the church to wed herself to Christ in his perfecting experience of God. In Christ's name let us seek such an experience of God as shall manifest itself in a revelation of Him through us, such as He made of Himself to the world through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Then, and then only, will it be possible for us to persuade men to share our experience of God in the New Jerusalem. Let us wed ourselves to Christ in his experience of the presence of God in order that we may be able to successfully invite the world to share that experience of God which we have made preëminently inviting. "And the Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

I have not undertaken to interpret much of the imagery of this last book of the Bible.

One thing only needs to be pointed out in order that my readers may understand the significance of what I have written concerning the City of God. Nations rise and fall in this allegory, rending, tearing, devouring one another, because they all embody the selfish spirit of the world; and the church, under its various symbols, is represented as being powerless to save them, until at last the City of God, the new Jerusalem, is seen descending from God out of Heaven. When the nations of the earth come to walk in its light their wounds are healed and the kingdoms of this world become the Kingdom of our God.

# XV

# CONCLUSION

John 10 : 23–29, John 13 : 36–38, John 14 : 1–17, John 16 : 25–32, John 14 : 19–23

*See appendix, pages 334, 335*

# XV

## CONCLUSION

A DEAR friend, after reading what I have written thus far, wrote, "I do so want to talk it all over with you, for there is much in it which I do not understand." Perhaps you, my reader, feel the same way. Well, let us talk it all over. Near the end of his life the disciples of Jesus said to him, "We cannot tell the meaning of what you have said to us concerning the Father and the way to Him." I am glad that they expressed this perplexity. His reply fully meets all the questions that arise in men's minds concerning His experience of God. "I go to prepare a place for you—that where I am, there ye may be also," Jesus said. Thomas took these words in a geographical rather than a spiritual sense. He thought Jesus meant that he was about to go to some material place to which his disciples could not go. Thomas, therefore, did

not understand what Jesus meant when he said, "And whither I go, ye know, and the way ye know." "We know not whither Thou goest," he said, "and how can we know the way?" Jesus' answer is very clear. This, in substance, is what he said: "Thomas, you should have understood what I meant by the words I used when I spoke to you of the way to find the Father. You should have taken my words in a spiritual, not a geographical sense. What I mean is that I am going to a still larger experience of God as my Father, and that by so doing I shall convince the world of the reality of that experience of Him. You say, Thomas, that you do not know the Father, nor the way to Him. That is wholly because you do not know me; for whoever has seen me has seen the Father, and also the way to Him. The fact that you do not know the way to an experience of God as Father is proof that you do not know me aright—that your conception of me is wrong." Oh, the wonderful meaning of these words of Jesus! Do you understand them? Does your knowledge of Christ give you knowledge of God,

have you followed Jesus into his personal experience of God? If not, Jesus has not shown you the Father in himself, and if you have not followed him into his experience of the Father then Jesus has not been able as yet to fulfill for you the one great mission for which he came into the world.

Evidently Jesus' answer to Thomas' question neither satisfied him nor the other disciples who heard it. He, and they, were still unable to grasp the deep but clear spiritual meaning of their Lord's words concerning that experience of God which he wished to fully share with them. Thomas seems to have been silenced by the words of Jesus when Jesus told him that he ought not to be ignorant of the Father or of the way to find Him. You may have felt as Thomas did when you have listened to the words of Christ on this subject and it has seemed to you useless to make further effort to understand them. I wonder if just now you do not feel inclined to close this book because it seems useless to pursue this question further. At times the disciples of the Master were almost exasperated

with this very teaching, so obscure did it seem to their minds. "Why does he speak to us in a language which we cannot understand?" they said. And yet, all the while, Jesus was laying hold of every word and illustration that would make it easy for them to comprehend his teaching. Dear Holy Master, how difficult was his task of showing men the Father, and the way to Him!

Philip saith unto him, "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us." Is not that also the question that we have desired to ask? Show us God, and we shall be satisfied that you see Him. Let us see Him whom you say you see. Don't tell us any more about Him whom we do not see, but let us see Him for ourselves. We have heard enough about your vision of the Father, which will never satisfy us. We must see Him as you say you see Him.

What answer did Jesus make to this request "to see the Father," as it came to him from Philip? Jesus said unto Philip, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me,

hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou, Show me the Father." But how does one see the Father in seeing Jesus? Is Jesus the Father? No, but he was in such close union with the Father that he revealed the Father. "Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me?" Jesus asked Philip. Do you not know that the words I speak are not mine but the Father's? Cannot you see that my works are all wrought by the power of God, a power which comes to me through my union with God? Cannot you believe that I am in union with God—that I am in the Father and the Father in me? "Why," Jesus said to Philip, "if you would thus believe in me as one in direct touch with God, your union with me would confirm you in your faith that I am in union with Him." Here is a very great truth which has not yet been given sufficient expression in these pages. Let us emphasize it now, even at this eleventh hour.

One who is in direct union with God can impart, in a measure, the power of his union to others who are not yet in touch with God. One who touches another who is in touch with

God may receive through him much of the power of his experience of God. God thus glorifies Himself in everyone in whom He dwells, by giving His power and love to others through him. This is what Jesus meant when he said, "Whatsoever ye ask in my name, that will I do—or rather that will the Father do through me, so that the Father may be glorified in and through me, as men recognize the fruits of my union with Him." One may receive much from God by coming into close heart union with another who is in direct touch with God. It was because the disciples of Jesus did not thus believe in Jesus—in his personal union with God—that he was unable to reveal the Father to them in his life—which was the fruit of that union. None of them knew Jesus as one in whom God was dwelling. They did not believe in him as the Christ. The Apostle Peter seems to have so believed for a moment, but his faith soon failed him. Not one of Christ's disciples was able to fully believe in the reality of his union with God until he had given the supreme evidence of that union by his final suffering and

death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead. "At that day," Jesus said, "ye shall know that I am in my Father and ye in me and I in you." No one will seek Christ's experience of God who does not believe that Jesus enjoyed such an experience.

All that Jesus can do for any man is to convince him of the reality of his experience of God and show him the way to enter into such an experience. Jesus considered that to be his one great mission in the world. The faith in Jesus that saves a man is such faith in his experience of God as leads one to seek and find that experience for himself. It is only as one thus follows Christ into the presence of God that one finds in Christ the way—the truth—and the life of God. Not until the disciples of Jesus came to believe in him as the Christ, as one whose union with God was real, did they seek that union for themselves. The Holy Spirit could not come to them as He came to Jesus until they sought such union with the Father as they now believed Jesus had. This is the meaning of that wonderful statement that the Holy Spirit could not come to the

disciples until they beheld Christ glorified; *i. e.,* they could not seek Christ's union with God until they came to believe that he had had that union himself.

Jesus found it very difficult to make even his nearest disciples believe that God was in him. The closest friends of Jesus during his lifetime thought of his love and goodness as wholly his own. To correct this mistake Jesus struggled with all his will. "Why," he cried, "do you call me good? There is none good but God. My goodness is His goodness; my love is His love; my righteousness is His righteousness. These are all the fruits of my union with Him and should be recognized as His and not mine."

I trust that we can now see that it would have been impossible for Jesus to make men recognize the fruits of his union with God in any less expensive way than that of the Cross. "Now is the Son of Man glorified," Jesus said, speaking of his crucifixion, and again, "If I be lifted up on the Cross I will draw all men unto me."

Jesus knew that the spiritual vision of his

disciples was so dim that they would require a very clear manifestation of the spirit of God before they would be able to see Him—to see the Father's presence in His son. Hence, as I have said, Jesus consented to the Cross as a necessity for the fulfillment of his mission on earth. There, he said, I shall be able to glorify God—to convince men of His presence with me as they see His love in me as an unmistakable sign of my union with Him.

Christ's disciples, however, could not believe in the reality of his life with God so long as they thought of him as one dead, but when they came to believe that he was alive from the dead, and that he had gone to a still more intimate experience of the Father, then they were convinced of the reality of his experience of God. The result was that they immediately sought such an experience for themselves and found it where Jesus had told them they would.

If you would have Christ's experience of God, it is vital that you, my reader, should believe that Jesus had such an experience, and that others with whom you are acquainted

have it. You will never seek that which you do not believe exists. You will never ask God for that which you do not believe He has ever given. Seek you must if you are to find Christ's experience of God, and you will never seek it until you believe in its reality. Have you not seen someone whose union with God was revealed in his life? Have you never been forced to say of a man "the only possible explanation of his words and deeds is the one which he gives, viz., that he is in direct contact with the eternal spirit of the Heavenly Father of Jesus Christ?" Has no one thus glorified God to you? Have you never seen one whose love for you was God's love for you? One whose love for his enemies would not have been possible if God had not shed it abroad in his heart? One whose victory over the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil were manifestly beyond his unaided power? One whose patience was more than human? One whose strength was in the power of God? Have you, who have not yet had Christ's experience of God, seen full proof of such an experience in his life by seeing it in the lives

of others with whom you have come in touch? What I want to know is whether you have ever seen one whom you have been sure was in direct union with God, such as Jesus is said to have experienced. "I pray," Jesus said, speaking to God of his disciples, "that they may be one as thou Father art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Do you understand the meaning of these words? I thought I did; but I have just discovered that I was mistaken. I supposed that Jesus was praying for the visible union of his disciples with one another, as proof of the power of his religion to so unite those who believed it. But now I see that what he prays for is that each of his disciples may have his experience of God, may be one with the Father, so that the world in seeing them may be convinced that he also had such an experience. For the world will not believe that Jesus experienced God unless it sees men now living in such an experience of Him. One who cannot see the Father in anyone whom he knows today will have little faith in

the claim that the Father dwelt in a man who lived 1900 years ago, concerning whose very existence he may be in doubt. But everyone who sees God in men now, will believe that He was in Jesus then.

"Do you now understand my teachings concerning the Father and the way to Him?" Jesus asked. "Yes," his disciples said, "now thou speakest plainly." But they did not understand; not even when they said they did. For what they supposed Jesus meant was that his infallibility was the supreme sign of his sonship to the Heavenly Father. "Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee; by this we believe that thou camest forth from God." Like them, great multitudes say that they believe in the Son of God because they see in him a wisdom which he did not get from man but from God. "He knew all things," these say, "and by this sign we know that he was divine." What did Jesus think of this ground for faith in him? Listen: "Do you now believe? Behold, the hour cometh and now is when ye shall leave me alone." Such faith as

yours will not stand the test to which it will be subjected. It will utterly fail in the hour when I am taken and crucified. And that very night they proved that their Lord's words were true. Their faith in Christ as the Son of God failed when they saw him seemingly helpless in the hands of his enemies. If they had based their faith on the evidence in him of God's righteousness and truth and love, then all those things which occurred to Jesus which caused them to lose faith in him, would have strengthened their faith in him. The taking away from me of all those supposed proofs of the sonship of Jesus to God, upon which I formerly based my faith in him, has served to confirm my faith in him. They were barriers, not helps to faith, as I found when it was made clear to my mind that they were untrue.

There is one more question that you will wish to ask before we part. You do not understand how God can manifest Himself to you as He does not manifest Himself to the world. You say, how will he make me sure of His presence? How can He come and enter into fellowship with me? I am glad that there was

a man like you who asked this very question of Jesus and that Jesus gave him the one and only possible answer to it, an answer that seems to have satisfied the questioner. His name was Judas, not Iscariot, and this is what he said: "Lord, how wilt thou reveal thyself unto us and not unto the world?" And Jesus answered: "If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him and we will manifest ourselves unto him." He that hath my commandments, and keepth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Obedience to the commandments of Jesus is, for every man, the condition of realizing His presence, and the presence of His Father. What those commandments are we have seen, —desire for God, for His personal spiritual presence, leading us to repent of, and forsake, all that contradicts His nature. When like Jesus of Nazareth it becomes our meat and drink to know and do the will of God, we shall find God, where he found Him, not in some distant heaven, nor in some ecclesiastical in-

stitution, nor in some sacred writings merely, but in our own consciousness, where we shall realize His spiritual presence. If with all our heart we thus truly seek Him we shall surely, surely find Him. Thus sayeth the Lord.

And now my task is done. It is useless for me to go further in writing on Christ's experience of God. The next step you, who read, must take alone, in your closet, with the door closed, where only the Father can give that open vision of Himself which is the exceeding great reward of all who seek direct union with Him. You have now to seek the experience of God of which you have been reading, the way to which, I humbly hope, has now been revealed. Have I made my book a way to God for all who read its pages? If so, my purpose in writing is fulfilled.

Now, take the next step—the step from the teaching of the book concerning Christ's experience of God to such an experience of Him for yourself.

You know now the way to the Father and what it will cost you to walk therein, for we have counted the cost of that growing fellow-

ship with God through which the soul reaches the perfection of God.

Enter now into Christ's direct experience of God and then come back to my book and read it again through the eyes of that experience, and you will see in it infinitely more than appeared to you while you read it with no experience of its teaching.

# APPENDIX

# APPENDIX

## TEXT FOR CHAPTER I

(*See Page 2*)

**Matthew 16 : 28**

Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

**Matthew 17 : 1-8**

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart,

And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him,

Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

**II Peter 1 : 16–19**

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts:

**I Corinthians 4 : 20**

For the kingdom of God *is* not in word, but in power.

**Romans 14 : 17, 18**

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men.

**Matthew 5 : 3–12**

Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

**Revelation 12 : 10**

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

**James 2 : 5**

Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

**Hebrew 12 : 28**

Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

**Hebrew 1 : 8, 9**

But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom.

Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

**Colossians 1 : 12, 13**

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:

## TEXT FOR CHAPTER II

(*See Page 36*)

**II Peter 1 : 2-11**

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge;

And to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness;

And to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

**II Thessalonians 1 : 3–5**

We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

*Which is* a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

**Matthew 7 : 17–23**

Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

**Matthew 21 : 33-43**

Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:

And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

And they caught him, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*.

When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

**John 15 : 1–8**

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

**TEXT FOR CHAPTER III**

(*See Page 66*)

**John 10 : 9**

I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

# CHRIST'S EXPERIENCE OF GOD

**John 3 : 1-11**

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

**Luke 13 : 23-29**

Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all *ye* workers of iniquity.

There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you *yourselves* thrust out.

And they shall come from the east, and *from* the west, and from the north, and *from* the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

**I Corinthians 1 : 9, 10**

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

**Galatians 5 : 19-21**

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*, Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

**Ephesians 5 : 5**

For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

**Revelation 3 : 19-21**

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

**Matthew 6 : 9-13**

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

**Matthew 4 : 7-12**

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

**Matthew 23 : 23-28**

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

*Ye* blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

*Thou* blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter that the outside of them may be clean also.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness.

Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

**Matthew 5 : 19, 20**

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

**TEXT FOR CHAPTER IV**

(*See Page 86*)

**Matthew 22 : 1-14**

And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden,

Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and *my* fatlings *are* killed and all things *are* ready: come unto the marriage.

But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*.

But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:

And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

## TEXT FOR CHAPTER V

(*See Page 98*)

### Matthew 13 : 10-15

And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

### John 3 : 19-21

And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

### John 8 : 12

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

### John 12 : 35, 36

Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.

# APPENDIX

### John 11 : 9, 10

Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

### John 4 : 17

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself.

### Colossians 1 : 9-13

For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:

### 1 John 2 : 8-11

Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

## TEXT FOR CHAPTER VI

(*See Page 118*)

### Matthew 13 : 1-8

The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.

And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

And when he sowed, some *seeds* fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundredold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

### Matthew 13 : 18-23

Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word and he becometh unfruitful.

But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth *it*; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

## TEXT FOR CHAPTER VII

(*See Page 140*)

### Matthew 13 : 24-30

Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

### Matthew 13 : 36-42

Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one;*

The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

### Matthew 5 : 43-48

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others?* do not even the publicans so?

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

### Matthew 10 : 2-12

And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his* wife? tempting him.

And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away.

And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same *matter*.

And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

**Romans 12 : 18-21**

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

**I Corinthians 4 : 10-16**

And unto the married I command, *yet* not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from *her* husband:

But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to *her* husband: and let not the husband put away *his* wife.

But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases:* but God hath called us to peace.

For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save *thy* husband or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save *thy* wife?

## TEXT FOR CHAPTER VIII

(*See Page 160*)

**Matthew 20 : 1-16**

For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace.

And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.

Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive.

So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.

But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the goodman of the house.

Saying, These last have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.

Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

So the last shall be first, and the first last; for many be called, but few chosen.

**Matthew 7 : 21-29**

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

**I Corinthians 13 : 1-3**

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

**Matthew 6 : 22, 23**

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!

## TEXT FOR CHAPTER IX

(*See Page 176*)

**Matthew 18 : 21-35**

Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him and forgave him the debt.

But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?

And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

**Luke 7 : 40-47**

And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little.

**Matthew 5 : 23-25**

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee:

Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

**Luke 11 : 25, 26**

And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

## TEXT FOR CHAPTER X

(*See Page 202*)

**Luke 15 : 3-32**

And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.

And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find *it*?

And when she hath found *it*, she calleth *her* friends and *her* neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

And he said, A certain man had two sons:

And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth *to me*. And he divided unto them *his* living.

And not many days after the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him.

And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee.

And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet:

And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill *it* and let us eat, and be merry:

For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.

And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

And he answering said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

## TEXT FOR CHAPTER XI

(*See Page 226*)

### Matthew 25 : 1-13

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.

They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

But the wise answered, saying, *Not so;* lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

# APPENDIX

### Matthew 24 : 42-51

Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming.

And shall begin to smite *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

## TEXT FOR CHAPTER XII

(*See Page 242*)

### Luke 16 : 1-31

And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

So he called every one of his lord's debtors *unto him*, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

And he said, A hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, A hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches?*

And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.

And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

The law and the prophets *were* until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from *her* husband committeth adultery.

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

**Matthew 25 : 42-45**

For I was a hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me.

## TEXT FOR CHAPTER XIII

(*See Page 276*)

**Matthew 26 : 17-29**

Now the first *day* of the *feast of* unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.

And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.

Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

# APPENDIX

### Luke 22 : 29, 30

And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;
That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

### John 6 : 51-57

I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat?

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

### John 6 : 60-63

Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it?

When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

*What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

## TEXT FOR CHAPTER XIV

(*See Page 286*)

### Revelation 21 : 9-14

And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials ull of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

Having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

And had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

### Revelation 21 : 18

And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper: and the city *was* pure gold like unto clear glass.

### Revelation 21 : 21-27

And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city *was* pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof.

And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

**Revelation 22 : 1-5**

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads.

And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

**Revelation 22 : 17**

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

**Hebrew 12 : 22, 23**

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

**Revelation 3 : 12**

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name.

**Revelation 11 : 15**

The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and his Christ; and he shall Reign for ever and ever.

## TEXT FOR CHAPTER XV

(*See Page 300*)

**John 10 : 23-29**

And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.

My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

**John 13 : 36-38**

Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.

Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

**John 14 : 1-17**

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father?

Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it*.

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

*Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

**John 16 : 25-32**

These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.

Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

**John 14 : 19-23**

Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

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